



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

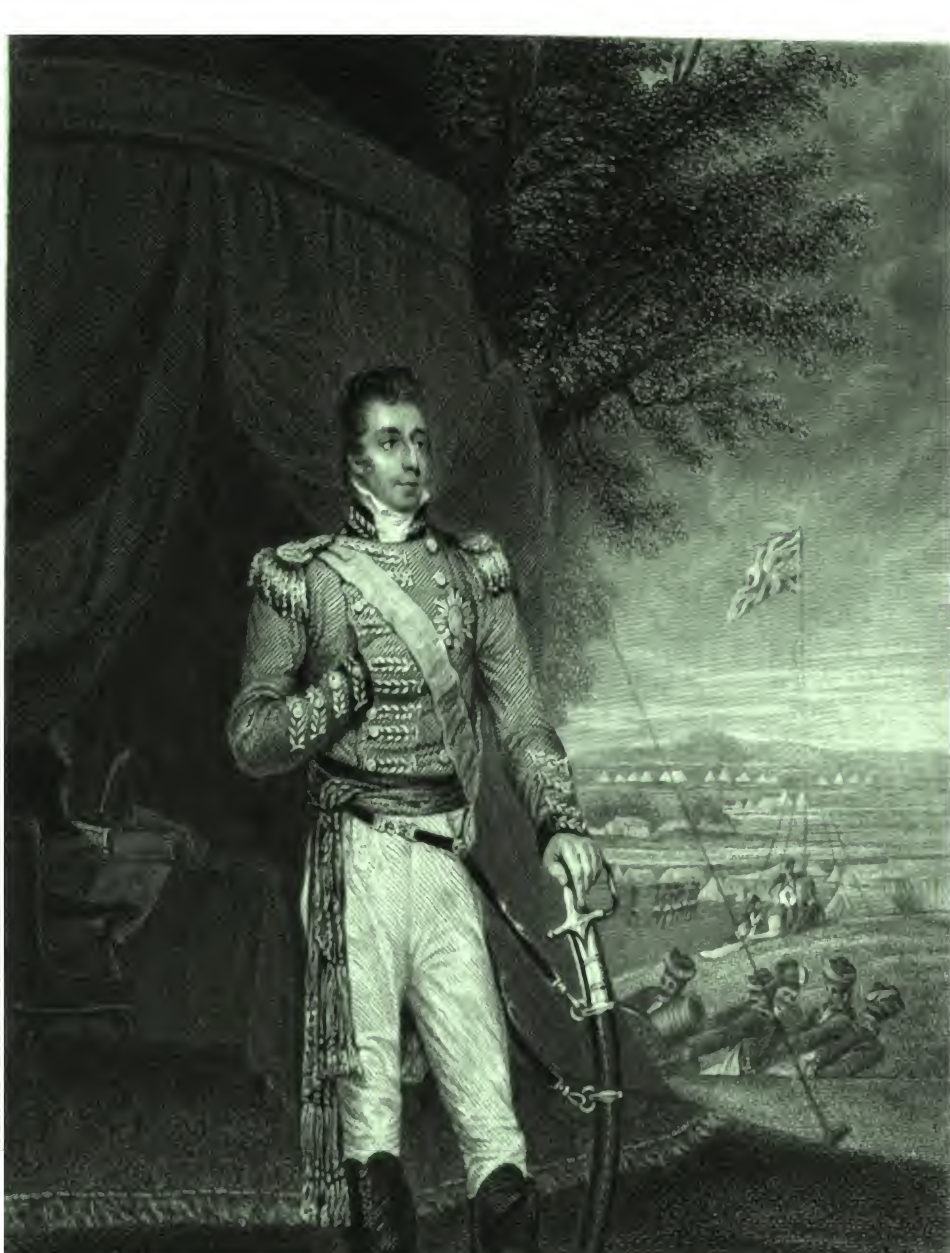
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

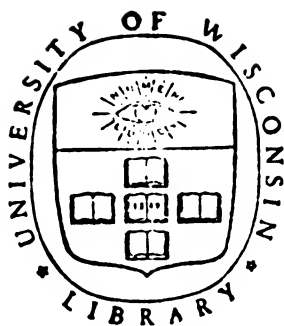
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



*Life of Field-Marshal His Grace
the Duke of Wellington ...*

William Hamilton Maxwell





Painted by Sir R. B. Ross, R.S.A.

Engraved by P. Colnaghi

Arthur Wellesley

THE
 HIS GRACE
 THE
 DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

*Portrait of the Duke of Wellington
 by Sir Martin Sheppard
 1809*



By Sir Martin Sheppard

LIFE
OF
FIELD-MARSHAL HIS GRACE
THE
DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

K.G. G.C.B. G.C.H. &c. &c.

William Pitt
W. H. MAXWELL,

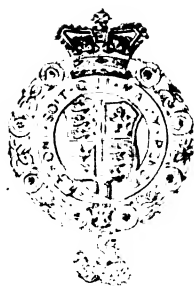
AUTHOR OF STORIES OF WATERLOO, THE BIVOUC,
&c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

Fourth Edition.

LONDON :
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
MDCCC XLV.

E 45
.W 45
M
—
I



To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty,

This Gift

OF

FIELD-MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

IS

By Her Majesty's Gracious Permission

With every sentiment of Loyalty & Respect,

Humbly Inscribed

By her dutiful Subject and Servant

W. L. Maxwell

ADDRESS.

IN submitting to the public the completed first volume of the **LIFE OF WELLINGTON**, the Publishers confidently indulge the belief that their pledges to their Subscribers have been all redeemed; and that they will be considered as proceeding satisfactorily to the accomplishment of the design which they had proposed to themselves—that, viz., of producing such a Work as should render a striking and well illustrated record of the stirring events which distinguish the career of England's Great Captain no longer a desideratum in the literature of his country. The great historic incidents which are woven into the tissue of His Grace's progress, make that progress itself a necessary subject of perpetual reference alike to the soldier and the statesman—the military tactician and the political: and the boon by which Providence has preserved him to his country, down to a period when the most important of those incidents are events of a past age, has rendered that rule of Biography

inapplicable, in his case, which postpones the narrative of illustrious men's lives till they are gone from amongst us. In the senate, as on the battle-field, the lessons taught by this foremost of the sons of England, cannot be spared by his country, even for a space. For these reasons it is, that the present publication has been undertaken ; — and of its being the wish of the Publishers to omit nothing which may render it equal to its purpose, they hope they may offer the present volume as proof.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Birth, Lineage, and Education of the Duke—Commencement of his Military and Parliamentary Career—Anecdotes—Ordered on Service—Campaign in the Low Countries—Remarks p. 1

CHAPTER II.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley returns to England—Ordered again on Service—Lands in India—Expedition against Manilla planned and abandoned—Lord Mornington appointed Governor-General of India—State of the East—Tippoo Sultaun—His Character—Army—Political Intrigues and Correspondence—Transactions with the Nizam—Military Preparations—War declared—Indian Army—Advance into the Mysore—Difficulty attending it—Tippoo attacks the Army of Cananore, and is repulsed—Defeated again at Mullavelly—The Effect of these Disasters 25

CHAPTER III.

Effect of the Defeat at Seedaseer—Harris crosses the Cauvery—Capture of Rosilay—March on Seringapatam—Description of the City—City Invested—Sultaunpet unsuccessfully attacked at Night—Carried by Colonel Wellesley in the Morning—Letters of Tippoo Sultaun and General Harris—Siege continued—Farther Correspondence—Batteries commence breaching—Preparations for the Assault—Troops employed—City taken 47

CHAPTER IV.

Tippoo apprised of the Assault—His Conduct and Death—The Body sought for, found, and deposited in the Palace—Anecdotes—Treasury robbed—Tippoo's Cruelty—Harris's First Despatch—The Suldaun's Funeral—Anecdotes—Property and Treasure found in the Capital—Review of the Campaign. 60

CHAPTER V.

Colonel Wellesley's Proceedings as Commandant of Seringapatam—General Order to the Army—Token of its Respect offered to Lord Mornington, and declined, but afterwards accepted—Succession to the Musnud of Mysore determined—Inauguration of the Rajah—Conciliatory Policy of Colonel Wellesley—Dhoondiah Waugh's Insurrection—Defeated, and driven into the Marhatta Country—Financial Document—Outbreak at Seringapatam suppressed—Reappearance of Dhoondiah Waugh—His Design upon Colonel Wellesley—Letter to Major Munro 84

CHAPTER VI.

Batavian Expedition—Command offered to Colonel Wellesley—Communications with Lord Clive—Threatened Disturbances in the Mysore—Colonel Wellesley declines leaving his Command—Dhoondiah defeats Gocklah—Colonel Wellesley marches against him—Surprises his Camp—Farther Operations—Defeat and Death of Dhoondiah—Colonel Wellesley ordered to Trincomalee—Delay there—Leaves Ceylon—Correspondence—Appointed Second in Command under Baird—Seized with Fever—Obliged to resign his Appointment—Restored to his Command in the Mysore 100

CHAPTER VII.

Colonel Wellesley returns to Mysore—Peace of India threatened—Geographical Position and present State of the Marhatta Powers—Scindiah—Holkar—Corps of Observation assembled on the Poonah Frontier—Colonel Wellesley appointed a Major-General, and nominated to a Command—Military Memorandum—Opening of the Campaign—Advance on Poonah—Negotiations—General Wellesley commences Hostilities—Ahmed Nuggur—Pettah carried by Assault—Fatal Duel—Anecdote of General Wellesley—The Fort surrenders—Valuable Property found there 114

CHAPTER VIII.

Marhatta Movements—Difficulty in obtaining Supplies—Occupation of Arunghabad—Marhatta Forces concentrate—Preparatory Arrangements for attacking them—Marhatta Camp, Numbers and Position—Battle of Assye—Observations—Death of Colonel Maxwell—Anecdotes 132

CHAPTER IX.

French Establishment on the Jumna—Military Preparations—Lord Lake's Campaign—Operations in Cuttack and Gujerat—War continued in the Deccan—Letter to Major Shawe—Difficulties experienced by General Wellesley—Treatment of Brinjarries—Colonel Stevenson detached—His Instructions—Fall of Burhampoor and Asseerghur—General Wellesley's Position—Marches against the Rajah of Berar 145

CHAPTER X.

Appearance of an Indian Army—Order of March—Movements of the Rajah of Berar—He attacks a Convoy and is repulsed—Scindiah despatches a Vakeel to the British Camp—His Reception—Suspension of Hostilities agreed to—Reasons—Colonel Stevenson—Wellesley marches against Scindiah—Battle of Argaum—Anecdote 161

CHAPTER XI.

March on Gawilghur—Description of that Fortress—Invested and carried by Assault—Cruelty of Beny Sing—Exemplary conduct of the Troops after the Storm—Rajah of Berar submits—Terms of his Treaty with the Company—Letter from the Marquess Wellesley—Treaty concluded with Scindiah—Order of Council—Disturbances in the Marhatta Country—General Wellesley marches against the Banditti—Attacks and Defeats them near Perinda—Correspondence with Generals Stuart and Lake—Letters, and Extracts from General Wellesley's Despatches 177

CHAPTER XII.

Rejoicings in India—Address to the Governor-General—His Reply—Resolutions in consequence—Thanks of the British Parliament voted to Lord Wellesley and the Indian Armies—Letters from Lords Castlereagh and Camden—Honours conferred on Generals Lake and Wellesley—The latter wishes to return to Europe, and resigns his Command—Addresses on his Departure—General Order to the Deccan Army—Review of his Indian Career—Colonel Monson's Affair—Effect of Family Influence—The Native Army—Anecdotes—Summary of Wellington's Character 198

CHAPTER XIII.

Expedition to Hanover—Major-General Wellesley appointed to a Command—Obtains the 33d Regiment—His Marriage—Marquess Wellesley's Indian Administration attacked—Sketch of his Government—Mr. Paull—Parliamentary Inquiry—Marquess Wellesley honourably acquitted—Sir Arthur appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland—Assumes his Duties—Danish Expedition—Army lands—Copenhagen invested—General Wellesley detached against a Danish Corps—Engages and defeats it—Siege pressed—Bombardment and Surrender of the City—Return of the Expedition—Remarks . 215

CHAPTER XIV.

Danish Fleet arrives in England—Remarks on the Bombardment of Copenhagen—Thanks of the House returned to General Wellesley—His Reply—Resumes his Duties as Irish Secretary—Official Character—Obtains the Command of the Expedition assembled at Cork—Official Letters from the Duke of York and Lord Castlereagh—Expedition sails—General Wellesley precedes it to Coruña 231

CHAPTER XV.

Peninsular War—Napoleon Buonaparte—State of Europe—Designs of Napoleon—Godoy—Royal Family of Spain—Its State—Portugal invaded—Spanish Auxiliary Corps—British Minister quits Lisbon—Arrival of the Russian Fleet—Junot advances—State of his Army on entering Lisbon—French Oppression—Its Effects—Bad Conduct of the Spanish General—French enter Spain—Apathy of the Spanish Court—Their Quarrels—Riots—Charles resigns, and Ferdinand assumes the Crown—Murat marches on Madrid—Beauharnois refuses to acknowledge Ferdinand—Sword of Francis delivered up to Murat—Proceedings at Madrid—Ferdinand sets out for France—Charles, the Queen, and Godoy, follow his Example, and abandon Spain 244

CHAPTER XVI.

Views of Napoleon—Royal Family of Spain pensioned—Insurrection at Madrid—Military Executions—Revolt in the Provinces—Its Progress—Horrible Outrages committed by the Mob—Lucien Buonaparte refuses the Throne of Spain, and Joseph accepts it—Assembly of Notables—Napoleon returns to Paris, and Joseph sets out for Madrid—Proclaimed King—Consequences of the Usurpation 259

CHAPTER XVII.

French Dispositions in Spain—Insurrectionary Movements suppressed—Siege of Zaragoza—Revolt in Catalonia—Swartz and Chabran defeated by the Somatenes—Siege of Gerona—Dupont's Expedition—Revolt in Andalusia—Battle of Baylen—Movements of Bessiers—Battle of Rio Seco—Effect of the Defeat of Baylen—Joseph abandons the Capital 270

CHAPTER XVIII.

State of Portugal—Disposition of the French Army—Expedition of Loison and Avril—Mutiny of the Spanish Troops—Proceedings at Oporto—Concessions of the French Commandant followed by severe Measures, which fail—Britain assists the Spanish People—Sir Arthur Wellesley visits Oporto—Despatch to Lord Castlereagh—Landing in the Mondego—Intelligence received from England 290

CHAPTER XIX.

First Movements of the British Army—Inefficiency of the Portuguese Partisans—Wellesley's Letter to Freire—Latter refuses to move from Leyria—Letter to Lieut.-Colonel Grant—Portuguese Detachment joins the English Army—Dangerous Position of the French—Junot detaches Loison to strengthen Laborde—The latter determines to risk an Action—Obidos—Movements of the French Generals—Junot leaves Lisbon to take the Command—Skirmish at Obidos—Laborde's Position. 301

CHAPTER XX.

Village of Rolica—Laborde's Position—Beautiful Scenery—Despatch to Lord Castlereagh—Rolica—Its Interest as a Battle and Moral Effect—Opening Movements of the 17th—Storming of the Centre Pass—Casualties of both Armies—Death of Colonel Lake—Letter of Sir Arthur Wellesley to Mr. Burrough. 311

CHAPTER XXI.

Prospects of Sir Arthur Wellesley—General Anstruther lands with a Reinforcement—Advance on Lisbon—Sir Harry Burrard arrives—His Interview with Sir Arthur Wellesley—Junot determines to attack the British—Strength of the Rival Armies—Despatch to Sir Harry Burrard—Description of the Battle—Different Attacks repulsed—Ferguson's Charge—Solignac and Brennier wounded, and the latter made Prisoner—State of both Armies—Consequences of an immediate Advance—Sir Hew Dalrymple arrives, and takes Command of the Army—His Dispositions—Loss of both Armies in the Battle—Kellerman arrives at the British Camp 323

CHAPTER XXII.

An Armistice concluded—Speculations in the English Camp—Junot retires to Lisbon—The Convention—Sir Arthur Wellesley opposed to several of its Articles—Sir Charles Cotton refuses his Consent—Memorandum for the Guidance of Colonel Murray—Communication to Lord Castlereagh—Address to Sir Arthur Wellesley—His Reply—Private Letter—Military Memorandum. 340

CHAPTER XXIII.

The British Camp—Admiral's Decision received—Feelings of the British Army—Convention ratified—Freire protests, instigated by the Junta of Oporto—Galuzzo invests Fort La Lippe—Almeida surrenders—Disturbances in Lisbon—Appointment of British Commissioners—Plunder of the French—General Hope's Precautions to preserve the Public Peace—Portuguese Feelings towards the French Generals—Liberation of the Spanish Prisoners—They are sent to Catalonia—Embarkation of the French—Letters to Lord Castlereagh, Sir John Moore, Sir Hew Dalrymple, and Colonel Murray . 357

CHAPTER XXIV.

Sir Arthur Wellesley returns to England—Sir Hew Dalrymple recalled—Feelings in England regarding the Convention—Board of Inquiry—Letter to Lord Castlereagh—Statements of Sir Arthur Wellesley—Sir Harry Burrard—Decision of the Board of Inquiry—The King's Opinion—Sir Arthur resumes his Official Duties—Receives the Thanks of both Houses—Speaker's Address—Sir Arthur's Reply 370

CHAPTER XXV.

Distribution of Joseph's Army—State of Spain—Folly and Presumption of the Junta—Their Armies neglected—Deliverance of Romana—Position of the Spanish Armies—French reinforced—Junta decide on active Operations—Position of the French army—Operations of Blake—Falsehoods promulgated at Paris—Napoleon's Decision—His Preparations—He reviews and harangues the Troops—Sets out for Erfurth—Dissatisfied with Joseph—Blake advances—Lefebvre attacks and defeats him—Movement of Acevedo—French obliged to retire—Organization of the French Army—Its different Corps and Commanders—Napoleon's Dispositions—Blake attacks the French—is defeated—and retreats to Los Monteros—Napoleon arrives at Vittoria—Arranges the Plan of his Campaign, and puts the Army into motion 385

CHAPTER XXVI.

French Dispositions—Soult's Operations—Belvidere's Army and Position—Battle of Gamonal—Fall of Burgos—Battle of Espinosa—Blake's Incapacity—Soult's subsequent Movements—Napoleon enters Burgos—Duke of Montebello—Ignorance of the Spanish Generals—Lannes advances against Castanos—Battle of Tudela—Plans of Napoleon—Defeat of San Juan—His Murder—Castanos succeeded by La Pena—Proceedings at Madrid—State of the Capital—Summons to surrender sent in—Napoleon commences Operations to reduce it—Morla proposes Terms—His Reception by Napoleon—Castellar escapes—Madrid surrenders. 401

CHAPTER XXVII.

State of Spain after the Convention of Cintra—Sir John Moore crosses the Frontier—Baird lands at Coruña—Shameful Misrepresentations of the Spanish Authorities—Early Difficulties of Moore—Mr. Frere—Sir John Hope arrives at Alba de Tormes—Romana's Army—Moore advances—Affair at Rueda—Intercepted Despatch—Moore determines to attack Soult on the Carrion—Affair at Sahagun—Movements of Soult—Moore receives alarming Intelligence—Napoleon's Advance—Passage of the Guadarama—Preparations for a Retreat by Moore—Napoleon's Movements and Designs 419

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Retreat commences—Cavalry Affair—Moore's Arrangements—Destroys the Bridge at Castro Gonzalo—Halt at Benevente—Disorderly Conduct of the Army—Cavalry Action—The British reach Astorga—Romana's Army—French Movements—Destruction of Stores—Napoleon enters Astorga—He is recalled to Paris—Soult entrusted with the pursuit of the English Army—Prospects of Sir John Moore—Character of his Retreat—Advantages of risking a Battle—Effects of the Retreat behind Astorga—Miserable Condition of the English Army—Disorders at Bembibre, and their Consequences—Affair at Cacabellos—Death of General Colbert—Retreat continued . . . 434

CHAPTER XXIX.

Retreat continued—Destruction of Stores and Treasure—Place of Embarkation chosen—Accident to Fraser's Division—Sufferings of the Soldiers—Failure in blowing up the Bridges—Affair at Constantine—Halt at Lugo—English Army form in order of Battle—Its Effect upon the soldiery—Soult manœuvres—Attack made, and repulsed—Soult declines a second Trial, and Moore continues his Retreat upon Betanzos—Halt there—Army reaches Coruña—English and French Positions—Magazine exploded—Fleet arrive, and Embarkation commences—Battle of Coruña—Baird and Moore wounded . . . 451

CHAPTER XXX.

Coruña—Admirable Conduct of Regimental Officers in that Battle—Operations of Soult—Difference of Opinion entertained in England regarding the Campaign—French Exaggerations—State of Spain—Its Armies and Generals—Spanish Operations—Zaragoza—The City invested—Its Strength and Resources—Our Lady of the Pillar—Progress of the Siege—Fall of Zaragoza—State of the City and Inhabitants—Summary of Events—Operations of Romana—of Soult—Affair of Ribadavia—Romana defeated—Portuguese Army destroyed—Murder of Freire—Soult appears before Oporto—That City carried by Assault—Cruelties committed by the Soldiery . . . 474

CHAPTER XXXI.

Soult and his Officers exert themselves to restrain the Soldiers—Conciliatory Measures of the French Marshal—Murder of Colonel Lameth—War in Catalonia—Fall of Rosas—Defeat of Vives—Reding obtains Command of the Spanish Army—Imprudently determines to attack St. Cyr—Is attacked and defeated—Escapes to Tarragona, and dies of his Wounds—Succeeded by Blake—General Character of the Peninsular War—Operations of Victor and Lapisse—Mistakes of the latter—Cartoajal defeated at Ciudad Real by Sebastiani—Cuesta fights Victor at Medellin—Is totally defeated—Summary of the State of Spain . . . 491

CHAPTER XXXII.

Portugal—Sir John Cradock and Mr. Villiers sent from England—Oporto—Lusitanian Legion—Lisbon—Inactivity of the French Marshals—Preparations for leaving the Tagus—Their Effect upon the Portuguese—Violence of the People—Doubts as to whether Portugal was defensible—Military Memorandum—Portuguese Army placed at the Disposal of England—Sir Arthur Wellesley declines the Command, which is given to Major-General Beresford—It is reorganized, and becomes effective—Cradock reinforced—Advances to Lumier and Saccavem—Prepares for active Operations—Movements of the French Generals—Sir Arthur Wellesley appointed to the chief Command in Portugal—Anchors in the Tagus—Effect produced by his Arrival—Despatch to Lord Castlereagh	502
--	-----

STEEL ENGRAVINGS IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

	PAGE
PORTRAIT of His Grace, when COLONEL WELLESLEY. Painted at Calcutta, by W. HOME, and Engraved by PETER LIGHTFOOT.....	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
VIEW of His Grace's Residence at STRATHFIELDSAYE. Engraved by J. T. WILL- MORE, from a Drawing taken on the Spot, expressly for this Work, by G. B. CAMPION.....	<i>Vignette.</i>
DEDICATION PLATE.	
DEATH of DHOONDIAH. Engraved by A. W. WARREN, from a Picture painted for this Work by A. COOPER, R.A.....	107
PORTRAIT of the Most Noble the MARQUESS WELLESLEY. Engraved by PETER LIGHTFOOT, from Sir T. LAWRENCE's beautiful Picture	129
PLAN of the BATTLE of ASSYE	136
COLONEL MAXWELL's LAST CHARGE at ASSYE. Painted for this Work by A. COOPER, R. A., and Engraved by J. H. ENGLEHEART.....	140
MILITARY MAP OF INDIA	147
PLAN of the BATTLE of ARGAUM	171
PORTRAIT of the Most Noble the MARQUESS OF ANGLESEY. Painted by Sir T. LAWRENCE, P.R.A., and Engraved by PETER LIGHTFOOT	257
PLAN of the BATTLE of ROLICA	316
STORMING of the CENTRE PASS at ROLICA. Engraved by J. T. WILLMORE, from a Picture painted for this Work by A. COOPER, R.A.....	320

	PAGE
PLAN of the BATTLE OF VIMIERO	329
PORTRAIT of General LORD HILL. Engraved by PETER LIGHTFOOT, from the original Picture by — PICKERSGILL, R.A.	385
MAP of SPAIN and PORTUGAL	401
BRITISH TROOPS FORDING THE Esla. Engraved by W. ARCHER, from the Original Picture, painted for this Work, by A. COOPER, R.A.....	439
PLAN of the BATTLE OF CORUÑA	463

In addition to the above List of Embellishments, the Volume contains Thirty-one Wood Engravings, illustrating the Costumes, Manners, and other Incidents of the Scenes to which the Narrative refers.

LIFE OF ARTHUR DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, LINEAGE, AND EDUCATION OF THE DUKE—COMMENCEMENT OF HIS
MILITARY AND PARLIAMENTARY CAREER — ANECDOTES — ORDERED ON
SERVICE—CAMPAIGN IN THE LOW COUNTRIES—REMARKS.

It has been asserted that a statesman's life should never be recorded, until the grave has closed upon his virtues and his failings. By parity of reasoning, the same remark will apply to the biography of a hero; and in both cases, the observation will be found to prove generally correct.

It has not unfrequently happened, that the information from which the story of a life is drawn, has been chiefly derived from the conversation or correspondence of the man, whose character and actions the work is intended to commemorate. Who, with a sensitive mind, would blazon his own virtues, or stoop to extenuate his faults? Hence, biography becomes, necessarily, a posthumous production — and until the fitful dream of life is ended, the lights and shadows of him whose modesty alike forbade

him to record his merits, or become an apologist for his mistakes, must remain in temporary abeyance.

Other objections may be urged generally, against writing the biographies of the living. There are few careers glorious and successful, from their commencement to their close—and fewer lives, sufficiently lustrous on the whole, to obscure by their dazzling brilliancy, the many weaknesses and crimes, to which, as a portion of natural inheritance, erring man is prone. Again, in perpetuating the story of a life, other feelings and other interests will be frequently involved. Those with whom a public man has associated—his friends and enemies—his supporters and opponents—all, a second time are brought upon the stage; and he who might fearlessly have dared the ordeal himself, would shrink from exposing to public scrutiny the characters of men whom he valued, whose good qualities might be numerous and estimable, while their evil ones unfortunately preponderated, thus rendering their whole career obnoxious to censure, if not sure of condemnation.

Who will believe that Napoleon was sincere, when he talked of amusing the tedium of captivity by recording the history of his campaigns, and the lives of his contemporaries?—Would he have given a faithful memoir of his friends, and unfolded the varied means by which the cadet of Brienne became sovereign of half the continent? Would he have disclosed the secret workings of a breast, in which ambition lay masked beneath the garb of liberty, until success permitted the veil to be thrown aside? Would he have ventured to chronicle a career, opening in the slaughter of a Revolution, and passing subserviently through every grade of government, from the republican to the absolute; and thus point out the passage to a throne, where every step had left a crimson trace behind it? No—dazzling as the details of a conqueror's career may be, the private transactions of his court and camp, would themselves have prevented Napoleon from becoming the historian of his

life, even though that life must be admitted to stand without a parallel.

It is remarkable as true, that to these varied objections to a living biography, Wellington forms almost a solitary exception. No career of half the success of his, has been tarnished with fewer failings. As a conqueror, he has left a blaze of victory behind him, unstained alike by cruelty and rapine,—and as a statesman, he never stooped to aggrandize a party at the expense of his independence. His measures were the emanations of an upright mind—his failures sprang from the same source, and hence they were few and pardonable. Refusing to pander to “the madness of the many,” he flung vulgar popularity away, when that could only be maintained by a sacrifice of good faith, and an abandonment of honest principle. True to the altar and the throne, all considerations of place and power faded into nothingness. The ravings of dishonest demagogues were idly wasted on the “iron Duke;” and, when he retired from the direction of state affairs, his enemies bore an unwilling testimony to his worth, and—

“Blamed the measures, but admired the man.”

A noble monument perpetuates the victories of Wellington in his native land, and a memorial of English admiration will, in a short time, ornament the capital of the “ocean queen.” Why should not also the record of an honourable life recall his glories to his countrymen, and tell Britain that she still can boast—long may that time continue!—that the **LIBERATOR OF EUROPE**, and the **FIRST CAPTAIN OF THE AGE**, is hers!

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, Duke of Wellington, fourth son of Garret, second Earl of Mornington, by Anne, eldest daughter of Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon, was born at Dungan Castle, on the 1st of May, 1769. As most of the leading families in Ireland have sprung from English and Scottish adventurers, who, being generally younger

scions of noble houses, preferred, to "a barren heritage" at home, the chance of fortune on the Spanish main, or the dangerous alternative of a settlement in the sister kingdom,—so the Wellesleys derive their origin from the Cowleys, or Colleys, of Rutlandshire,* of whom two brothers, Walter and Robert, emigrated in the reign of Henry VIII. and settled in the county of Kilkenny. Every inducement was held out by that monarch, to extend and strengthen a Protestant settlement in Ireland; and grants of land, with places of trust, were freely offered to those who would venture to accept of them in a country, where life and property were so notoriously insecure. We find, accordingly, the Colleys, who had been bred to the law, presented in 1531 with the Clerkship of the Crown in Chancery, for their joint lives; and in 1537, Robert, made Master of the Rolls, and Walter, Solicitor-General. The latter held that responsible office for nearly twelve years, and eventually resigned it for a more lucrative appointment—the Surveyor-Generalship of Ireland.

Henry, eldest son of Walter, selected a military life, and held a Captain's commission from Elizabeth. In 1559 he was appointed by the "Queen's Majestie" to a special command in "Carbery and the Offalies," made a Commissioner of Array, and returned to the Irish Parliament for the borough of Thomastown. He was subsequently sworn of the Privy Council, and knighted by the Lord Deputy. Sir Henry Colley appears to have been highly esteemed by Sir Henry Sidney, who, on retiring from his Lieutenancy in Ireland, warmly recommended him to the Earl of Sussex, his successor in the government. In his letter to that nobleman, he styles

* In Glaiston Church, a very ancient monument still remains, erected to the memory of Walter Colley, and Agnes his wife; it bears the date of 1408. In 1407, Walter was Lord of the Manor of Castle Oakham, holding also of Edward Duke of Buckingham the manor of Glaiston, in the hundred of Wrangdyke.

Colley his "sound and fast friend," and describes him as "valiant, fortunate, and a good servant." He further notices the good order in which he kept his "county" (the King's), and terms him "as good a borderer" as he "had found anywhere." He concludes his letter by a solicitation that he may be employed.

Sir Henry Colley married Catherine, eldest daughter of the Lord Chancellor Cusack, by whom he left issue, Sir George Colley of Edenderry, ancestor of the noble house of Downshire; Gerard, from whom the Moors of Barnmeath are descended; and Henry, of Castle Carbery, immediate ancestor of the house of Mornington. Sir Henry Colley died in 1584, and was succeeded by his son, of the same name. He also chose the profession of arms, and was nominated to two places of considerable trust, being made Constable of Philipstown, and Seneschal of the King's County. Subsequently, we find him at the head of the Irish commissariat,—at those times a difficult and responsible place; and his activity honourably mentioned in the tranquillizing of his immediate neighbourhood, which had been for some time seriously disturbed. For these good services he was knighted in 1576; and in 1593 and 1599, did "knight's duty" at "the great hosting of Tara." He was afterwards returned for the borough of Monaghan, which he represented so late as 1613.

By his wife, a daughter of Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, he left two sons and three daughters—Henry, his eldest son, marrying Anne, daughter of Christopher Peyton, Auditor-General of Ireland. He was succeeded, in 1637, by his son Dudley, who was a determined royalist, held a command in the army of Charles II., and was for some years representative of the borough of Philipstown.* He married Anne, daughter of Henry Warren, of Grange, in the county of Kildare; and left a numerous issue, of

* Dudley Colley, for "good and loyal service," was rewarded by a grant of the lands of Ardkill and Cullinstown, in the county of Kildare.

whom Henry succeeded to the estate of Castle Carbery ; and Elizabeth married Garret Westley, of Dangan, in the county of Meath.

The Westleys, or Wellesleys, were the descendants of a Saxon family, long settled in the county of Sussex. The ancestor of the Irish branch was standard-bearer to Henry II. ; and having accompanied that monarch in his expedition in 1172, received a royal grant of valuable and extensive estates in the counties of Kildare and Meath. He too left issue, who, during successive reigns, obtained military distinction, accompanied by additional grants of land. In the confused history of these times, occasional notices of the Wellesleys are found. William was slain in 1300, in an engagement with one of the native chiefs. John, his brother, was made a baron of the realm, and nominated Constable of Arden, now called Ardee. He was afterwards possessed of the manor of Dunmore ; and William, (probably his son,) in 1381, was appointed by commission, under the hand and seal of Richard II., Governor of the castle and lands of Carbery, otherwise Ardkill.

Henry, who succeeded Dudley, married Mary, only daughter of Sir William Usher, by whom he left a numerous family. Of these, the youngest son, Richard, was adopted by his kinsman, Garret Wellesley, who bequeathed him his estates, on condition that he assumed the name, and bore the arms of Wellesley.* The patent issued accordingly, from the Heralds' Office in 1728. Richard

* Dr. Southey mentions, in his life of John Wesley, that an offer was made by an Irish gentleman of large estate, to adopt Charles, John's brother, as his heir ; and that, for years, his expenses at Westminster School were defrayed by this patron. He farther states, that this gentleman called upon Charles at Oxford, and repeating his offers, pressed him to accompany him to Ireland, which the younger Wesley declined. That Garret Wellesley contributed to the expenses of Charles Wesley's education, and probably intended to have provided for him more permanently, may be very true ; but we doubt much, that any proposition of adoption was made ; and doubt still more, that if made, it would have met with a rejection.

Colley Wellesley held the lucrative places of Auditor and Registrar of the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham, and second Chamberlain of the Court of Exchequer. In 1734, he was Sheriff of Meath, sat for many years in Parliament as representative of the borough of Carysford, and, in 1747, was raised to the peerage by George II., and created Baron of Mornington. His Lordship married Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. Sale, Registrar of the Archdiocese of Dublin; and was succeeded in the titles and estates by his son Garret, who was first appointed Custos Rotulorum of the county of Meath; and, in 1760, farther advanced in dignity, and created Viscount Wellesley and Earl of Mornington. The Earl married, 6th of February, 1759, Anne, eldest daughter of the Right Honourable Arthur Hill, Viscount Duncannon, by whom he had issue—1st, Richard, the late Marquis Wellesley;—2d, Arthur Gerald, who died an infant;—3d, William Wellesley Pole, Baron Maryborough;—4th, Arthur, Duke of Wellington;—5th, Gerald Valerian, D.D.;—6th, Sir Henry, G.C.B.;—7th, Frances Seymour;—8th, Anne;—9th, Mary Elizabeth.

The Earl of Mornington was a man of polished manners, and kind and hospitable disposition. He was little known as a politician, but he was celebrated for his exquisite taste in music.

In Ireland, the devotion of the lower classes to their own beautiful melodies is unbounded; and in the higher circles, and particularly during the century that is past, "the science of sweet sounds" was cultivated with peculiar care. The talent of Lord Mornington was precocious; and his father, a musician himself, took care to foster the dawning promise, so very apparent even in early childhood.* Still, the

* "His father, who was a tolerable performer on the violin, used to amuse the child, then in his nurse's arms, by playing to him; and the boy took great delight in papa's fiddling. Dubourg, an eminent violinist of that day," (who was appointed in 1728, Composer to the King, and Master of the Royal Band in Ireland,) "being on a visit at the house, Mr. Wellesley was handing him his violin, but the child would not suffer him to take it till his little hands were

means of education were necessarily imperfect; and, while most liberally gifted by nature, Lord Mornington was slightly indebted to art for any portion of his celebrity. Although nearly self-taught, his compositions were examined and admired by the first *artistes** of the day. His glees and songs acquired an extraordinary popularity; some church-compositions were equally successful; and, as a mark of their respect, the Irish University conferred upon the noble author a Doctor's degree. A taste like his was naturally averse to the turmoil of political intrigue; and, happy in his family and friends, Lord Mornington avoided the bustle of the crowd. He lived, loved and respected; and no death was regretted, by an extensive circle of acquaintances, more sincerely than his. That event occurred at his house in Kensington, on the 22d of May, 1781.

Lord Mornington died in the noon of life, and left a large family, and a property considerably encumbered. His son, the late Marquis Wellesley, correctly appreciating the value of his excellent mother, confided the management of his property to her care; and at once assumed the payment of his father's debts—an act, on his part, the more honourable, because it was entirely discretionary.

The earlier education of the distinguished brothers, the Earl of Mornington and the Hon. Arthur Wellesley, commenced at Eton. In due time Lord Mornington removed to Oxford, and there completed his studies; while, with excellent judgment, his younger brother Arthur, was

held. After having heard Dubourg, however, there was still more difficulty in persuading him to let Dubourg return the violin to his father; and the child would never afterwards allow his father to play while Dubourg was in the house.”—*Musical History*, by George Hogarth.

* “As he had however never received the least instruction in this abstruse but pleasing science, he wished to consult both Rosengrave and Geminiani; who, on examining his compositions, told him they could not be of the least service, as he had himself investigated all the established rules, with their proper exceptions.”—*Daines Barrington*.

removed to the Military College of Angiers,* in the department of the Maine and Loire, as a fitter school for one already destined to the profession of arms.

A boy's career is seldom particularly remarked, until after-life has stamped the individual as one beyond his fellows. At his first school, Wellesley gave certain promise of a distinguished manhood,—Wellington did not—and yet how easily can this be reconciled! The taste and fancy that afterwards produced the senator, were german to the classic forms of Eton; while those mental properties which alone can constitute the soldier, like metal in a mine, lay dormant, until time betrayed the ore, and circumstances elicited its brilliancy.

That Wellington, beyond a fair and creditable proficiency, exhibited no marked superiority at Angiers, is acknowledged; while Napoleon, his contemporary at Brienne, if assertion be true, displayed martial propensities in every thing connected with his studies or his sports. Had the latter fallen at Toulon, would his snowballings have been remembered and recorded? All boys of strong nerve and lively disposition, are essentially martial in their amusements; for every field-game is but the similitude of a battle. Here, however, strength rather than science obtains the mastery. A year or two confers a temporary superiority on the boy: for a time he maintains a leadership: this advantage is lost as he approximates to manhood; and the bully of a school, is rarely found in after-life among the bravest and most fortunate.

Lord Mornington, having attained his majority, had offered himself and been returned for the borough of Beeralston, and obtained place under Mr. Pitt. He was subsequently, elected a representative of the royal borough of New Windsor, and named one of the Commissioners for

* Angiers was formerly a place of considerable note, and had a population estimated at thirty thousand souls. The university was very ancient, being founded by St. Louis. At the period of young Wellesley's residence, the military school was under the direction of the celebrated engineer, Fignerol.

Indian Affairs. This appointment, in some degree, led the way to his future promotion : and an event, at the time occasioning but trifling notice, influenced, no doubt, his own subsequent success, and still more decidedly directed the fortunes of his distinguished brother.

On the 7th of March, 1787, Arthur Wellesley obtained his first commission, being gazetted to an Ensigncy in the 73d regiment ; and on the 25th of the following December, he was promoted to a Lieutenancy in the 76th. In the succeeding month, he exchanged into the 41st, and on the 25th of June was appointed to the 12th Light Dragoons. On the 30th of June, 1791, he was promoted to a company in the 58th foot ; and on the 31st of October, 1792, obtained a troop in the 18th Light Dragoons.

At the general election, which occurred during the summer of 1790, he was returned to the Irish parliament for Trim, a borough whose patronage belonged to the house of Mornington. His personal exterior must have been very different from what those who have only seen him in after life, would imagine. Sir Jonah Barrington describes him as “ ruddy faced, and juvenile in appearance ;” adds, “ that he was popular among the young men of his age and station ;” and, alluding to his parliamentary *début*, he observes, “ his address was unpolished ; he spoke occasionally, and never with success ; and evinced no promise of that unparalleled celebrity which he reached afterwards.”

That Barrington was a very superficial observer, the following anecdotes will prove :—

“ The first time I ever visited the gallery of the house, was on the opening of the session of 1793, and I was accompanied by a friend, a barrister of high standing, and a person of acknowledged judgment. He was one of a celebrated society, termed ‘ The Monks of the Screw,’ and consequently was on intimate terms with all the leading men of the day, including Grattan, Cuff (afterwards Lord Tyrawly), Langrish, Parnell, Wolf, &c. &c. As each member entered the house, my friend named them in suc-

cession, and generally at the same time rapidly sketched their characters. A young man, dressed in a scarlet uniform, with very large epaulettes, caught my eye, and I inquired who he was. 'That,' replied my friend, 'is Captain Wellesley, a brother of Lord Mornington's, and one of the aid-de-camps of the Lord Lieutenant.' 'I suppose he never speaks,' I added. 'You are wrong; he does speak sometimes, and when he does, believe me, it is always to the purpose.' The subject which occupied the attention of the house that night, was one of deep importance in Irish politics. A farther concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics, had been recommended in a speech from the throne, and an animated debate resulted. Captain Wellesley spoke on the occasion; and his remarks were terse and pertinent, his delivery fluent, and his manner unembarrassed. I particularly recollect, a casual allusion to parliamentary reform produced from him the parenthetical observation,—'By the by, were such a measure introduced, I should most strenuously oppose it.'

"On another occasion, I was present when a property qualification for members of parliament, was first brought under the consideration of the house. The Hon. John Monk Mason opposed it. He held a large roll of papers in his hand, which he flourished vehemently, to the manifest alarm of the members immediately beside him. In winding up his speech, he emphatically concluded by saying, 'I give my determined opposition to this invidious measure, in the name of all the younger brothers in the house,'—striking Captain Wellesley, who sat beside him, so sound a whack between the shoulders with his parchment baton, as to be heard distinctly in the gallery. The occurrence produced an instant and uproarious burst of laughter through the house."*

The appointment of Captain Wellesley to the staff of the

* For these and the following anecdotes connected with the Duke's early life, I am indebted to a gentleman who was then resident in the metropolis, and has since held a high official situation.

Earl of Westmoreland, had placed him in the household of the Viceroy, and as aide-de-camp, required his constant attendance at the castle. The Irish court, at that period, was celebrated alike for its hospitality, its magnificence, and its dissipation. The princely display of the Lords-Lieutenant of those days, entailed a heavy expenditure upon the numerous *attachés* of the court, and too frequently plunged young men of high family and limited fortunes in very distressing embarrassments. Captain Wellesley's patrimony was small—his staff appointment more fashionable than lucrative; and it is not surprising, that soon after he had come of age, he found himself involved in pecuniary difficulties. At the time, he lodged in the house of an opulent bootmaker, who resided on Lower Ormond Quay. The worthy tradesman discovered accidentally, that his young inmate was suffering annoyance from his inability to discharge a pressing demand. He waited on Lieutenant Wellesley—told him that he was apprised of his embarrassments—mentioned that he had money unemployed, and offered a loan, which was accepted. The obligation was soon afterwards duly repaid; and the young aide-de-camp was enabled, in a few years, to present his humble friend to an honourable and lucrative situation. Nor did death cancel the obligation; the Duke's patronage, after his parent's death, was extended to the son of his early friend, for whom he obtained a valuable appointment.

The professional advancement of Captain Wellesley was steadily progressive. On the 30th of April, 1793, he was gazetted Major of the 33d foot, on the resignation of Major Gore; and on the 30th of the following September, he succeeded to the Lieutenant-Colonelcy of the regiment, *vice* Lieut.-Col. Yorke, who retired from the service.

For the last three years the political horizon of Europe had been seriously overcast: affairs daily became more gloomy—"coming events threw their shadows before"—and the frightful spread of democratic principles, the murder of the French monarch, the increase of the republican army to

450,000 men, and the extraordinary success that attended these raw and undisciplined levies, roused Britain into energy; and compelled her to prepare herself for a contest, on which not only her liberties, but her existence as an empire, were dependent.

France was fearfully convulsed; the reign of terror was at its height; and though persecuted to the death, the royalist party—from their limited means unequal to make head against the democrats—still maintained a courage and displayed an attitude of resistance, worthy of a better fortune. Hence there was a hope, that if the Bourbon party were supported from abroad, a reaction might be produced in France, and the alarming spread of republicanism be yet arrested. To effect this object, a landing on the coast of Brittany was proposed,—an expedition, prepared with all possible despatch,—and the command entrusted to the Earl of Moira.

Among other regiments that received orders of readiness for the coast of France, the 33d was included. Ardent as Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley was for an opportunity of meeting an enemy in the field, and that too, in the command of a battalion, one cause alloyed his satisfaction, and occasioned him painful uneasiness. His circumstances were embarrassed—he wanted means to discharge his debts—and he determined not to quit the country, and leave unsatisfied creditors behind him. It is true that his parliamentary privilege secured him from personal annoyance; but to have obligations he was unable to discharge, to one with his sensitive feelings, was intolerable. One course only was left, and without hesitation he adopted it. He called upon a gentleman with whom he had extensive dealings, enumerated his debts, stated his inability to pay them, and proposed to allocate the whole of his disposable income for their discharge, that the whole might be liquidated by degrees. The honourable proposition was accepted, a power of attorney left with Mr. Dillon, that gentleman accepting the trust, which he continued to hold

until the last shilling of Colonel Wellesley's liabilities was discharged. Adversity tests principles severely. A man, exempted from financial inconveniences, can only conjecture how far his firmness would have enabled him to overcome, with scanty resources, a pecuniary embarrassment. Yet he who was indebted to a tradesman for assistance, and by a rigid limitation of his personal expenses was enabled to pay off his debts, lived to be possessor of a princely income, after, by the integrity of his name alone, supporting an army in the field, when his military chest was almost left without a guinea.

The individual* to whom Colonel Wellesley confided the settlement of his affairs, was enabled, by honourable and successful industry, to accumulate a handsome fortune. He is long since dead; but he delighted to mention the circumstances under which his trust was undertaken, as highly creditable to the moral principle of the gallant soldier. He lived to witness the triumphant career of his young favourite, and be present at a scene, that to him must have proved indeed a moment of pride and exultation.

Many years had elapsed, when Mr. Dillon, then resident at Brighton, was honoured by an invitation to attend the birth-day ball. When the festivities were at their height, an express reached the Pavilion, and a packet was delivered to the Prince. He broke the seals, and read the contents of the despatch with evident delight. Suddenly the Prince waived his hand, the dancing ceased, and his Royal Highness announced to the brilliant circle who surrounded him, that Wellington was again a conqueror. He had just received the intelligence of the battle of Talavera; and read the glorious details aloud, the company having crowded around his chair; and one lady, in her anxiety to hear the particulars, stumbled actually across the Prince's leg, and fell upon the floor. His Royal Highness, unconscious of the occurrence, continued reading the despatch; and when he

* Mr. Thomas Dillon, formerly a woollen-draper, in Parliament Street, and afterwards of Mount Dillon, in the county of Dublin.

concluded, pronounced a glowing eulogy on the victor. This was highly honourable to the manly feeling of the future king; for at the time he was allied to the Whig party, who, from a bitter hostility to the government, laboured to decry the Peninsular campaign, by deteriorating from Wellington's talents and successes, and omeneing the gloomiest results, which, no doubt, they piously anticipated and prayed for.

The intended descent upon the French coast, however, was never effected. The plan, from the very outset, had met with considerable opposition; and the employment of some *émigrés* as officers of artillery, added to the appointment of two upon his personal staff, rendered Lord Moira exceedingly unpopular. But the failure of the Duke of York in the Netherlands, caused the attempt on Brittany to be abandoned. The destination of the troops, now on board transports, was consequently changed; and instead of proceeding to the coast of France, the troops were ordered to sail directly for Ostend.

A gloomier prospect never opened on an army about to take the field. Tournay had already surrendered—the Duke, forced from his position before Oudenarde, was falling back on Antwerp—and Lord Moira prudently determined to retire the garrison from Ostend, and unite himself, by forced marches, with an allied corps under Clairfayt. Indeed, no other course remained; the Prince of Coburg had sustained a severe defeat; and Clairfayt himself, was preparing to abandon Ghent, and join the main body of the allies.

In pursuance of his plan, Lord Moira issued orders for the embarkation of the garrison; and although this service was ably executed in a single day, the Republicans, by rapid marches, brought their advanced guards to the city gates, before the last of the English troops had filed from the sally-port.

Lord Moira, in the mean time, had taken the route of Ecloo and Ghent; and, though moving in dreadful weather, and in the face of a superier force, his march was success-

fully executed. The rain, during the entire time, fell in torrents; and as the troops were unprovided with camp equipage of any kind, they suffered equally from fatigue and the inclemency of the weather. The enemy pressed them closely, and on the 6th of July they were vigorously attacked at Alost. With their accustomed impetuosity the Republicans penetrated the place—a sharp *mêlée* occurred in the streets—the British troops behaved most gallantly, and the French were bravely repulsed. In this affair, Colonels Vandeleur and Doyle were much distinguished, and both severely wounded.

The unfortunate campaign of the late Duke of York carries with it nothing but distressing reminiscences; indeed, from first to last, it is but a history of disasters—a record of brave exertions ineffectually struggling with ill fortune. On the 12th, his Royal Highness was attacked in front of Mechlin, and the reinforcement brought him by Lord Moira, alone enabled him to hold his ground. This success was temporary; a second attempt was made and repulsed; but forced by vastly superior numbers, the allies retreated upon Antwerp. Here, Lord Moira resigned his command, and immediately returned to England; and the regiments which had formed his separate corps, were drafted into the different brigades, and incorporated with the army of the Netherlands.

The retreat continued—first on Breda, and afterwards to Bois-le-Duc. Nothing particular occurred, excepting occasional alarms produced by affairs between the outposts, until on the 14th of September, when the Republicans having unexpectedly crossed the morass at Peil, threw themselves suddenly upon the British right, and completely cut off 1,500 of the contingent of Hesse Darmstadt. This success endangered the whole of the position: for Boxtel, the advanced post of the allies, having been carried, as it commanded the Dommel, it became necessary to recover the village, or at once abandon an alignment, of which the key was now in possession of the enemy. To attempt the

former the royal Duke decided—and for this service, two battalions of the guards, the 12th, 33d, 42d, and 44th of the line, a brigade of guns, and some squadrons of dragoons, were selected; the whole under the command of Lieutenant-General Abercrombie.

On a close reconnoissance, made early on the morning of the 15th, the Republicans appeared so formidably posted, as to induce the English commander to suspend his order for attack, until he despatched an aide-de-camp to the Duke of York to demand further instructions. His Royal Highness persevered in his original determination, and directed an immediate movement of the troops; but at the same time, left all ulterior operations, after a first attack, to Abercrombie's own discretion.

On clearing the village of Schyndel, the mounted pickets of the enemy were observed, drawn up upon a plain of considerable extent, skirted by a thick grove of fir-trees. The English dragoons advanced to drive them in, supported by the two regiments of guards, with the 33d and 44th—the 12th and 42d being held by Abercrombie in reserve. The French hussars retired leisurely, and the British as boldly advanced, until the opening of a numerous artillery, which the Republicans had masked within the fir-wood, betrayed the immediate presence of the enemy in force, and, of course, rendered it necessary on the part of the assailants to fall back on their reserve. At first, the regressive movement was steadily effected; but as the ground became more difficult and the road narrowed, the light cavalry got mobbed with a household battalion, and the whole were thrown into confusion. The French hussars advanced to charge; and, for a minute, the situation of the embarrassed troops was most alarming. Perceiving the disorder, Colonel Wellesley deployed the 33d into line, immediately in rear of the household troops. Opening his centre files, he permitted the broken cavalry to retire, and then closing up his ranks again, occupied the road, and held the enemy in check. The French advanced with

their usual confidence; and the 33d, reserving their fire, waited coolly until the enemy were forming for a charge. At that moment the regiment received their colonel's order, and delivered a close and searching volley, that fell with murderous effect into the crowded ranks of the Republicans; and their rapid and well-directed fusilade completed the enemy's repulse. In turn, the French were obliged to fall back in confusion; and the English retreat was effected without any molestation, excepting a slight cannonade, that, from its distance, was ineffective.

The British still continued retiring; and in the middle of September, they occupied one bank of the Maes, while French pickets were posted on the other. The success of the Republicans was every where progressive. The fortress of Creve Cœur, commanding the sluices of Bois-le-Duc, surrendered after a few shells had been thrown in on the 9th of October. There, some hundred *émigrés* had unfortunately taken shelter; and when the place fell, these wretched men were shot by order of Pichegru, who acted on this occasion, it was said, in compliance with the wishes of the Directory.

The bad faith observed during the entire of this disastrous campaign, by the Dutch to their confederates, the British, became daily less concealed—for the States-General were known to be carrying on secret negotiations, to effect for themselves a separate peace with the French Republic. The exertions of their brave allies, elicited no effort upon their part to work out the deliverance of their country. They regarded the progress of the campaign with an apathy not easily imaginable; and latterly, the peasantry on every occasion, displayed feelings towards the English of marked hostility. Collisions frequently occurred between the soldiery and inhabitants,—assassination became frequent on one side,* and severe retaliation followed on the

* "A drummer entered a Dutchman's house upon the side of the dyke, to purchase some apples, exposed, as he imagined, for sale. The fellow, supposing the lad's intention was to steal them, aimed a pistol at his breast; and,

other. Indeed, before this unfortunate campaign had terminated, the deadly hatred of the Dutch was not only wreaked upon the wounded and infirm, whom misfortune had thrown within their power; but with a fiendish malignity it extended to the very dead, whose bodies were torn from the grave, and exposed in ghastly nakedness, after undergoing most disgusting mutilations.

Autumn was over; and winter, which usually ends active operations, and allows the wearied soldiery a period of repose, was the season when the Republicans had determined to make decisive efforts for the subjugation of the Low Countries. The time was wisely chosen,—a country intersected by canals, and in every place capable of being maintained, requires a power of aggression on a scale proportionate to its means of defence. But winter removed all the advantages which a difficult country gives to a retiring army: a frozen surface removed the obstacles which dykes and inundations at other seasons would present; and the Republicans could now turn their immense levies upon an enemy of inferior strength, already disheartened by defeat, and abandoned by worthless confederates.

The allied forces were not long permitted to remain unmolested in their cantonments behind the Meuse: at daylight, on the 19th of October, the right wing of the army was furiously attacked, and the advanced posts of Dutzin and Apelthorn were simultaneously assaulted. The light cavalry of the Prince de Rohan were driven back—and the 37th regiment, to avoid being cut off, was obliged to retire along the Waahl. From the similarity of their dresses, a

pulling the trigger, wounded him severely. The flank battalion of guards marching by at the moment, a serjeant darted towards the house, in order to secure the offender; but finding the doors closely barricaded, he found his way through a window, and was proceeding up the staircase, when the Dutchman sprang from a dark corner, and stabbed him to the heart. The house was instantly surrounded and set on fire by the enraged soldiers; one man escaped along the thatch enveloped in the smoke; but the rascal who had killed the serjeant, was discovered, and immediately hung upon the nearest tree as an example."—*Clarke*.

body of French hussars were mistaken for those of Rohan, and allowed to advance upon the 37th. Too late the error was discovered: the enemy charged,—the infantry were embarrassed by the unexpected attack,—and, assailed in unfavourable ground, before the regiment had extricated itself from the confined space by which it had to retire, a serious loss in prisoners, besides a considerable number in killed and wounded, was sustained.

The impression made upon the right of the position, added to certain intelligence that the enemy had crossed the Meuse at Ruremond in force, and by occupying Cleves, endangered the left flank of the allies, induced the Duke of York to pass the Waahl in order to preserve, as long as it was possible, his communications with the fortress of Grave.

This was the last movement of the army while under the direction of his Royal Highness. He was recalled on the 2d of December, and succeeded by Count Walmoden as commander-in-chief.

Immediately after his appointment, the Hanoverian general determined to act upon the offensive; and a combined attack by the allied forces upon those of the Republicans, was arranged. The allies were formed into three columns, of which two were intended to operate on the left and centre of the French, while the third should turn their left at Tuyl. Owing to the badness of the roads, Lord Cathcart, with the left, did not reach the point of attack in sufficient time to act simultaneously with the columns on the right and centre. Dundas, however, finding that Werdenberg had been abandoned during the night, decided on advancing at once on Tuyl. His attack was boldly made; and though the approaches to the place were exposed to a flanking fire from the works at Bommel, and defended by a strong abattis,* the town was carried by the assailants, and the French driven across the ice, with a

* Trees felled, and laid in a line, with their branches extending outward.

considerable loss in men, beside four pieces of artillery which fell into the hands of the allies.

This was but a momentary gleam of success. After suffering a vigorous siege, a heavy bombardment, that nearly reduced the place to ruins, obliged the garrison of Grave to capitulate, and the Republicans were thus enabled to recross the Waahl, and occupy Tuyl again. To check the farther advance of the enemy, Dundas resolved, at all hazards, to maintain himself at Meteren. The post was occupied by a wing of the 33d, and a squadron of hussars, with two light field-pieces. But as Meteren was considerably advanced, and the Hessian piquets had been retired, as a post, it was completely isolated, and open to an enemy's attack.

It was the intention of General Walmoden, with the united corps of Dalwick and Dundas, at day-light next morning to have attacked the Republicans, and driven them once more across the river. But, in becoming assailant, the allied commander was anticipated by the French; for, on the afternoon of the 4th, the enemy advanced on Meteren, and in such force, as eventually obliged Colonel Wellesley to fall back upon the British lines.

The impetuosity with which the Republicans came on at first bore down all opposition, and for a moment they obtained possession of the guns. But the remainder of the 33d coming opportunely to his assistance, Colonel Wellesley was enabled to charge into the village, repulse the enemy, and retake the cannon; and although pressed closely by the infantry, and threatened by the hussars, he succeeded with trifling loss in retiring upon the post of Geldermalsen, where with the 42d and 78th highlanders, the 33d maintained themselves, although efforts were repeatedly made by the Republicans, with fresh troops, to carry the place. Night ended the contest; and the French abandoned the attack, after sustaining a sanguinary repulse from a force in every arm their inferior.

The inclemency of the season increased; and a threatening

movement of the French on Gorcum, evincing a disposition on their part, notwithstanding the winter promised to be severe, of continuing active operations, decided General Walmoden on retiring behind the Leck, and taking a position there, extending from Wageningen to Cuylenberg. A sudden thaw, however, suspended the retreat; and to maintain their position on the Waahl, the enemy's advanced posts were attacked, and driven with some loss behind the village of Geldermalsen. But the weather changed again,—the frost set in with heavy snow,—a retreat was unavoidable,—and on the 16th of January the columns commenced their march.

The sufferings endured by the British army during the continuance of this harassing movement, have been frequently described by those who shared its dangers and privations. Retreats, more recently effected during the subsequent struggles on the continent, have thrown its horrors in the shade; but still, the hardships sustained by the allies from want and cold, have seldom been exceeded. A desperate season, long and rapid marches, dark nights, broken roads, and an unfriendly population, rendered this regressive movement one of the most calamitous on record. The casualties of each day's march increased alarmingly; weak men were gradually left upon the road; and the hardiest, as the retreat continued, began to lag behind, and fell into the hands of the enemy, or perished for want of shelter. The commissariat was bad,—the medical department worse. A military writer, who was present during the whole of the retreat, says: "Removing the sick in waggons without sufficient clothing to keep them warm, in that rigorous season, had indeed sent some hundreds to their graves; whilst the shameful neglect that then pervaded the medical department, rendered the hospitals nothing better than slaughter-houses for the wounded and the sick."

On the evening of the 27th the allied columns reached Deventer, after a distressing march. A halt there was

imperatively called for, to afford the exhausted soldiers a period of repose. But this brief indulgence was denied: the Republicans, powerfully reinforced, and numbering, by the best information, nearly 50,000 men, were advancing by forced marches, in the full expectation of overtaking and cutting off the English brigades, whose numerical and physical inferiority appeared now to mark them out an easy conquest. On the 29th the retreat was resumed; and such stores and ammunition as could not, for want of means of transport, be removed, were here destroyed, and thus prevented from falling into the hands of the Republicans.

Although the French, as they ever have done, proved admirable marchers, their activity was unattended by its customary success; the British rear-guard constantly presenting a steady attitude when overtaken, that averted an attack, or ended in a repulse of the assailants. At last, the frontier of that inhospitable country they had come to protect, was passed; and a kindly welcome from the Bremeners repaid, in some degree, the ill treatment and neglect which the gallant islanders had experienced from that "amphibious race," who had invited an alliance, only to betray those who confided in their worthless professions.

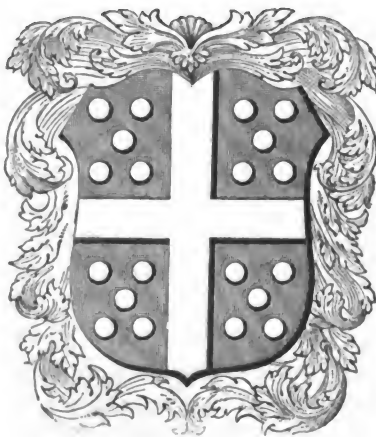
In the commencement of his military career, there was nothing to excite the hopes of a youthful soldier; and from Colonel Wellesley's opening campaign, some experience and but little glory could be gained. The most profitable school in war is often found a rough one; but if privations are repaid by conquest, the end achieved more than compensates the labour. The disastrous campaign in Holland had no results but constant disappointment; and the tide of victory had turned against the arms of England, ere Wellesley's first field was fought. Before the raw levies of the Republic, the best troops in Europe were constantly receding. Step by step, the British and their allies were forced from the Low Countries,—everywhere the French arms were triumphant,—and victory

followed fast on victory, until Europe was nearly at the mercy of the Directory.

In this season of defeat, could Wellesley have imagined that, in the zenith of their fame, it was reserved for him to stay that career of conquest, and win from the victors of an hundred fields, the laurels they had so profusely acquired? Such, however, was the case; and the commander of the worn-out rear-guard in Holland, was destined to direct the closing charge at Waterloo!

Between Napoleon and Wellington many circumstances of earlier life are strongly coincident: their birth in the same year,*—their education at the same schools,†—and the commencement of their military careers, were nearly contemporaneous. The influence each had on the other's fortunes would be a curious speculation. What might the present state of Europe be, had Napoleon perished, a nameless man, in tracing out his first battery at Toulon;—or Wellington, as ignobly, “the leader of a broken host,” among the swamps and dykes of Holland!

* Napoleon was born August 15th, 1769. † Angiers and Brienne.



THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF THE ANCIENT
FAMILY OF COLLEY.

CHAPTER II.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WELLESLEY RETURNS TO ENGLAND—ORDERED AGAIN ON SERVICE—LANDS IN INDIA—EXPEDITION AGAINST MANILLA PLANNED AND ABANDONED—LORD MORNINGTON APPOINTED GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA—STATE OF THE EAST—TIFFOO SULTAUN—HIS CHARACTER—ARMY—POLITICAL INTRIGUES AND CORRESPONDENCE—TRANSACTIONS WITH THE NIZAM—MILITARY PREPARATIONS—WAR DECLARED—INDIAN ARMY—ADVANCE INTO THE MYSORE—DIFFICULTY ATTENDING IT—TIFFOO ATTACKS THE ARMY OF CANANORE, AND IS REPULSED—DEFEATED AGAIN AT MULLAVELLY—THE EFFECT OF THESE DISASTERS.

THE British brigades, on returning to England after their unfortunate campaign, might have been said, in the words of Francis the First, nearly to "have lost every thing but their honour." In effective strength the regiments were seriously reduced; for of those who returned to their native shores, a large proportion, rendered *hors-de-combat* by past suffering, were of necessity invalided and discharged. A number of the artillery horses were unserviceable; the cavalry required an extensive remount; but the threatening aspect of affairs had roused the energies of the nation, and immense exertions were consequently made to recruit the regiments to their full establishments, and place the army once more in a fit state for active service.

Among other corps, the 33d, after its return home, had laboured to replace the casualties of the late campaign; and Colonel Wellesley's exertions had proved so successful, that in a short time his regiment was reported effective.* Ministers having decided on fitting an expedition for

* After remaining a short time in camp at Warley, the 33d moved in the autumn to Southampton.

the West Indies, an order was sent for the embarkation of the 33d. Colonel Wellesley accordingly joined the fleet, under the command of Admiral Christian, and proceeded with the troops.

In the autumn of 1795, the admiral put to sea; and, from the very start, encountered a succession of bad weather, that, for severity and continuance, has remained unparalleled. After persevering for five weeks, the men-of-war and transports were so seriously damaged by sea and storm, that no alternative was left but to bear up for Portsmouth. In the interim between the departure and return of the expedition, the government had partially altered their intended plans regarding the West Indies. The sailing of many of the regiments, including the 33d, was countermanded, and Colonel Wellesley ordered to Poole, where he continued until the following spring. There the regiment completed its recruiting, and received orders of readiness for the East Indies. In April 1796, the 33d sailed; and after stopping for refreshments at the Cape, where their Colonel, whom illness had detained, rejoined his corps, it proceeded for its destination, and disembarked at Calcutta, early in February 1797.

Soon after the arrival of Colonel Wellesley in the East, an expedition against the Island of Manilla having been planned, the preparations were so far effected, that the first division of the troops destined for this service, had not only embarked, but actually sailed for Prince of Wales's Island, where the whole of the expedition had been ordered to assemble. Sir James Craig had been appointed to the command; and two king's regiments, the 12th foot, under Colonel Harvey Aston,* and the 33d, under Colonel Wellesley, were included in the corps under orders of embarkation. But intelligence, received by an overland despatch from England, caused the expedition to be abandoned. This, as it turned out, was a most fortunate

* Killed in India, in a duel.

occurrence. Aware how much the military establishment must be weakened by the removal of a large proportion of the troops, the Sultaun of Mysore had determined to seize an opportunity so favourable for the execution of his designs. The sailing of the fleet was to have been the signal for him to take the field; and no disposable force the Indian government could command, would have saved the Carnatic from invasion.

The opening of Lord Mornington's parliamentary career, brilliant as it was, held out no illusory promise of future eminence. Every day his character as a statesman rose higher, as his talents became gradually developed. None commanded the attention of the house more fully when he addressed it. The Minister acknowledged the value of his support, and the King marked his personal esteem by presenting the noble Earl with the ribbon of St. Patrick. Much of the celebrity of public men depends upon the times they live in; and there never was a period in the history of Britain, when her salvation rested so entirely on the firmness and sound judgment of her government. Embroiled with half the continent,—still writhing under the loss of America,—anarchy spreading rapidly abroad, sedition working busily at home,—her colonies everywhere endangered,—all these, in themselves sufficiently alarming, sank before one mightier dread; and that was occasioned by the precarious situation in which her eastern dominions were placed.

Indian affairs were indeed in a most perilous position: the native princes were ready to revolt;* and French influence was employed, at their respective courts, to

* "Tippoo was endeavouring also to influence Zemaun Schaw to make a diversion on the northern frontier of the English territory, and pressing the Mahratta powers to join the league, and make common cause against the British. Scindiah was notoriously devoted to the French; and of course, the court of Deccan was unfriendly. The Rajah of Berar was more than suspected of disaffection; and Holkar, if not a declared enemy, could not be regarded as a friend."

foment the disaffection towards the English, and hold out promises of assistance, and that on such an extended scale, as should enable them to throw off a yoke they secretly detested, and recover the provinces, of which the conquests of a century had dispossessed them. The longer duration of British dominion in the East, depended on the adoption of a course of policy that should combine boldness with discretion. Sir John Shore had been recalled; and no little difficulty arose at home in finding a suitable successor. A choice however was happily made; and, fortunately for Britain, to the Earl of Mornington the government of India was confided.

The noble lord landed from La Virginie frigate on the 17th of May; and proceeding to Calcutta, was there received by the proper authorities, and inducted to his high command with the customary formalities. Lord Mornington lost no time in correctly ascertaining his existing relations with the native princes; and certainly, in a position more fraught with danger, no governor-general had ever been placed before.

Although the British interests were threatened on many points, the great cause of all alarm centred in the capital of Mysore. The Sultaun was a deadly and a dangerous enemy. Taught from a child to detest the English, he seemed to have inherited, with the musnud, his father's hatred of the British name. The war that Hyder* had

* Hyder Ally Cawn was of lowly origin, and at an early age entered the service of the Rajah of Mysore. For years he held a subordinate rank, but rose by degrees, until he attained the command of the army. On the Rajah's death, Hyder usurped the government, after imprisoning the royal family in the fortress of Seringapatam.

Although illiterate himself, Hyder was a munificent patron of arts and manufactures. "His ends were great; his means prudent; a regular economy supplied a source of liberality, which he never failed to exercise whenever an object which he could render in any shape subservient to his ambition, solicited his bounty."—*Memoirs of the War in Asia*.

It is a curious coincidence, that, long after his elevation, Hyder, like Napoleon, was familiarly known among his soldiers by the *sobriquet* of "The Corporal."

commenced, Tippoo continued, until, deprived of foreign assistance by the treaty of Paris, he was obliged to accept terms which he had formerly declined. The splendid success that attended the invasion of Mysore in 1792, while it reduced his resources one-half, confirmed him in an undying antipathy to the conquerors.* Hence the policy of his after-life was directed to one steady purpose, the overthrow of British influence in India—and even in the visions of the night, as it afterwards appeared, he dreamed only of the destruction of the infidels.

In disposition, Tippoo was truculent as his father, but possessed a greater portion of duplicity. His character was a singular medley. In some points he was wise; in more, he was weak. He was quick, cunning, and revengeful,—fond of intrigue, and patient and persevering in effecting the object at which he aimed. He was profuse and parsimonious,—one while engaged in pursuits worthy of a monarch, and at another, idling time away in admiring his *bijouterie*, or chronicling his dreams. A bigot in faith, he persecuted all from whom he differed. As a Naib, or forerunner of the prophets, in whose advent Mahommedans believe, Tippoo was an active proselytizer, and by no means scrupulous in the means, provided the end was accomplished. In politics, he was faithless; in religion, he was a monster;† and if moderate abilities are

* The conditions exacted from Tippoo Sultann by Lord Cornwallis were most humiliating: one-half of his dominions,—the release of all the prisoners,—as hostages, his two elder sons,—and a subsidy of three crores and thirty lacs of rupees, in gold mohurs, pagodas, and bullion. When to these are added a loss of 50,000 men, 800 pieces of artillery, and 67 forts, it will not appear surprising how sincerely the tyrant of Mysore must have dreaded and detested his conquerors.

† Tippoo, on his accession to the throne, “commanded that all the youngest and handsomest of the European soldiers should undergo the hateful ceremonies of Mahommedanism: a compliance with which odious mandate was only secured by giving them a quantity of deleterious stuff, called *majum*, which deprived them of their senses, while the barbarians effected the horrid object of their misdirected zeal.”—*Hook's Life of Baird*.

“ On

excepted, with great personal intrepidity, and a strong affection for his children and servants,* the Sultaun of Mysore had not one redeeming quality.

“In the infancy of English glory, a foe like the Sultaun was truly formidable. His military talents were considerable; and, with excellent judgment, and untrammelled by eastern presumption, he saw the defects of native discipline, and laboured to remove them. He had striven, and with success, through the agency of Europeans, to introduce into his camp the improved systems of modern warfare; and the army of the Mysore had, within a few years, undergone a mighty change. Many confidential communications that passed between the Sultaun and his chief officers, were found after the fall of the capital; and prove with what assiduity he had devoted his whole attention to the establishment of a force that, by physical and numerical superiority, should crush a power he detested, and overthrow England’s dominion in the East. Tippoo’s infantry were tolerably drilled—his artillery very respectable; and though his numerous horse were quite unequal to meet and repel the combined charge of British cavalry, as irregulars they were excellent; alike dangerous to an enemy from their rapid movement—the audacity with which their sudden assault was made—and the celerity, when repulsed, with which their retreat was effected.”

The military establishment of the Sultaun, taking the abstract only of its real strength, without Looties, who

“On the Malabar coast alone, it was computed that 20,000 persons suffered under his persecutions in the short space of four months. The men who refused to submit to circumcision were hanged on the trees surrounding the villages; and women of the noblest caste in India, on refusing to adopt the Mahomedan custom of covering their bosoms, which they consider a mark of degradation and slavery, had their breasts cut off, and suffered other insults and indignities.”—*Clarke*.

* Although the number of his attendants was enormous, the Sultaun never permitted any, whom illness or accident had rendered useless, to be discharged.

accompanied the Mysore army chiefly for the purposes of plunder, was at the opening of the campaign as follows:

Regular Cavalry	6,000
Irregular ditto	7,000
Guards (slaves)	4,000
Regular Infantry	30,000
Pikemen	15,000
Carnatic Peons	8,000
Pioneers	6,000

Grand Total 76,000

The golandanzes (gunners), and the gun-lascars, are included.

The pay of the Sultaun's troops varied: the regular cavalry, whose horses were furnished by the Sircar, received, in net pay, twelve rupees monthly. The irregular, who were horsed by their own commanders, had, for a Mahommedan trooper, forty-five rupees; and for an Hindu, forty. They were also entitled to half plunder; and a horse, if killed on service, was paid for by the state, according to a stipulated allowance.

The pay, in net money, of the infantry, was divided into three classes: the first had ten rupees; the second, eight and one-half; and the third, seven, monthly. The guards had fifteen; pikemen, ten; golandanzes, ten; pioneers, eight; gun-lascars, seven; and Carnatic peons, five. The French auxiliaries were paid by contract: Lally, as commandant, two thousand rupees; five hundred for each gun; twelve pagodas for an elephant; for a European horseman, ninety; a foot soldier, thirty; half-castes, twenty; sepoy, sixteen. Under this contract, the French commandant was obliged to pay his officers, mount and maintain his cavalry, find clothes and arms for the infantry, and provide bullocks to draw the guns. The army of the Sultaun was divided into kutcheries, or divisions. Of the brigades composing them, the regular horse were termed *mokums*; the irregular, *rusallahs*; and the infantry, *cushoons*.*

* Each tub (regiment) had two galloper-guns, three-pounders, and each rusalla two six-pounders. A cushoon was composed of one tub of cavalry,

Previous to the appointment of Lord Mornington, and while his communications with Sir John Shore were of the friendliest description, Tippoo had secretly despatched envoys to the Isle of France, to effect an alliance with the Republicans, and obtain their assistance in the grand attempt he was maturing against the English. The extent of his own military preparations could not be concealed, and the suspicions of the Presidency of Madras, in consequence, had been already strongly excited. But the Sultaun's embassy transpired; and the whole tenor of his negotiation was disclosed, by a proclamation from the French Governor of the Mauritius.*

In this official document of Citizen Malartic, while the duplicity of Tippoo was established, his ignorance was still more ridiculously exposed. The extent of assistance that he demanded was most absurd.† In his instructions to the

four rasallas of infantry, and two eighteen-pounders. The gallopers were drawn by mules, and all the draught cattle belonged to the circar. Each cushoon had an elephant attached to it, which was harnessed like a horse, to assist the guns through difficulties. The cavalry and infantry were clothed alike, in a striped blue and white stuff, of country manufacture. The artillery had also a cotton stuff, white ground, with large round blue spots.

* Malartic thus notices the spirit of the Sultaun's despatches :—

“He desires to form an offensive and defensive alliance with the French, and proposes to maintain, at his charge, as long as the war shall last in India, the troops that may be sent to him.

“He promises to furnish every necessary for carrying on the war, wine and brandy excepted, with which he is wholly unprovided.

“He declares that he has made every preparation to receive the succours which may be sent to him; and that, on the arrival of the troops, the commanders and officers will find every thing necessary for making a war, to which Europeans are but little accustomed.

“In a word, he only waits the moment when the French shall come to his assistance, to declare war against the English, whom he ardently desires to expel from India.

“As it is impossible for us to reduce the number of soldiers of the 107th and 108th regiments, and of the regular guard of Port Fraternité, on account of the succours which we have furnished to our allies, the Dutch, we invite the citizens who may be disposed to enter as volunteers, to enrol themselves in their respective municipalities, and to serve under the banner of Tippoo.”

† Asiatic Register, 1779.

ambassadors,* they are directed to bring back "30,000 cavalry, 40,000 infantry, and 100 pieces of cannon;" a strange subsidy to expect from an island, whose garrison never exceeded 2,000 men, and, when captured in 1810, did not amount, marines included, to 900!†

Although at first inclined to believe that Malartic's proclamation was a forgery, Lord Mornington was confirmed as to its authenticity, by a despatch of Lord Macartney from the Cape. A strong remonstrance was in consequence addressed by the British Governor to the Sultaun; and Tippoo's explanatory reply, shows to what unblushing falsehoods an eastern diplomatist will resort, when his interests require it.

"In this Sircar ‡ (the gift of God) there is a mercantile tribe, who employ themselves in trading by sea and land. Their agents purchased a two-masted vessel, and having loaded her with rice, departed with a view to traffic. It happened that she went to Mauritius, whence forty persons, French, and of a dark colour, of whom ten or twelve were artificers, and the rest servants, paying the hire of the ship, came here in search of employment. Such as chose to take service were entertained, and the remainder departed

* The "supplemental instructions" given by the Sultaun to his ambassadors to the Mauritius, afford a very curious specimen of Indian cunning and duplicity. The copy was found, after Tippoo's death, with other documents, and shows that the "Refuge of the World!" was certainly a sad rogue:—

"You must all of you study the French language; but none of you must converse with the French sirdars in French. You are to speak through an interpreter; yet if the interpreter should mistake a word or two, you will set him right in French; excepting, however, one or two words, none of you four must hold any converse in the French language, because, while an interpreter is employed, they (*the sirdars*) cannot tell whether you say any thing more or less; whereas if the French sirdars say any thing more or less, you, knowing the language, will detect it; you must make yourselves appear ignorant of their language, whereby you will be able to learn their real sentiments, while they consult together upon the various subjects that come before them."

† Asiatic Register, 1799.

‡ Sircar means a court, or state.

¹ The Sultaun was thus styled by the ambassadors, in their despatch to him from Mauritius.

beyond the confines of this Sircar (the gift of God); and the French, who are full of vice and deceit, have, perhaps, taken advantage of the departure of this ship, and put about reports, with a view to ruffle the minds of both Sircars."

This curious document, dated 25th December, had been preceded by another on the 20th of November. The Sultaun, on being informed of the military preparations that were going on at the Presidency, affected to disbelieve the report. "By the favour of God," he observes, "the conditions or obligations of peace established between us, have obtained the utmost degree of strength and firmness; under the circumstances of their being firmly observed and adhered to, of the daily increasing union and friendship, and of the constant intercourse of correspondence, the report cannot be possibly entitled to credit." He proceeds: "My friendly pen writes this. I hope your lordship will be pleased to gratify me by writing of it. I have no other intention or thought, than to give increase to our friendship." His conclusion ran thus: "Let your lordship continue to gratify me with gladdening letters, notifying your welfare." No stronger proof can be given of the deep duplicity of the Sultaun, than the simple fact, that, at the very time he addressed Lord Mornington in these terms, he was in actual correspondence with Buonaparte, then at Cairo with the Egyptian army.*

* The following reply was returned to Tippoo's letter by Napoleon, but being intercepted, it never reached the Sultaun:—

"Head Quarters, Cairo, 7th Pluviose, 7th Year of the Republic.

"You have already been informed of my arrival on the borders of the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England.

"I eagerly embrace this opportunity of testifying to you the desire I have of being informed by you, by the way of Muscat and Mocha, as to your political situation.

"I would even wish you could send some intelligent person to Suez or Cairo, possessing your confidence, with whom I may confer.

"May the Almighty increase your power, and destroy your enemies.

"BUONAPARTE."

The letter is addressed "To the most magnificent Sultaun, our greatest friend, Tippoo Saib."

Convinced, by every circumstance, that Tippoo was only manœuvring to gain time, to enable him to receive the assistance and supplies promised by the French Republicans, Lord Mornington continued his preparations for war, and applied himself assiduously in strengthening his former alliances with the Nizam and the Peshwah. In a fresh treaty with the former, conditions offensive and defensive were included; and it was especially stipulated that the French mercenaries, who officered the army of the Nizam, should be immediately dismissed. Although the demand was acceded to, its execution was attended with considerable difficulty. But a mutiny having broken out among the sepoy, the object was cleverly effected. "A movable column was despatched from Fort William, reached Hyderabad by forced marches, and, assisted by the Nizam's cavalry, surrounded the infantry, arrested the officers, and disarmed the sepoy." This successful blow annihilated the French influence in the Carnatic; and the intelligence of Nelson's glorious victory, which reached Calcutta on the 31st, relieved the Governor-General from all apprehension of the Suldaun receiving assistance from abroad. His preparations to take the field were now nearly completed; and after waiting in vain for a satisfactory answer to his remonstrance, the army was ordered to advance,—a step preparatory to a formal declaration of war. Lord Mornington, in person, repaired to Madras, to be in more immediate communication with General Harris,—the scene of operations having been already selected, and no alternative left but an appeal to the sword.

The early confidence placed in the new Governor-General by the British residents, was very strikingly evidenced on his arrival. A large advance of money was necessary for the public service; and so much did the presence of His Excellency stimulate the exertions of the civil servants of the Company at Madras, that, with the assistance of Sir Alured Clark, Vice-President of the Council at Calcutta,

twenty lacs of rupees* were obtained at once, "and the movement of the army not delayed for an hour."

Yet, while Lord Mornington prepared for a crisis that was easily foreseen, to the very last, the avenue to a bloodless adjustment was left open. While he assured the Suldaun, in his letter of the 9th of January, that his falsity was known, and his treacherous negotiations with the Republican government at the Mauritius established beyond a doubt, he still held out the olive-branch to the offender. "Under all these circumstances," alluding to Tippoo's gross violation of subsisting treaties, "we are ready to renew and confirm the bonds of amity, on such conditions as shall preclude the continuance of those jealousies, which must subsist so long as a final and satisfactory adjustment of all the causes of suspicion be delayed."

The season, in which operations in the Mysore country should commence, had already set in. No reply whatever had been vouchsafed to the last letter of the Governor; and, as the reduction of Seringapatam had been determined upon, the failure of Lord Cornwallis in 1791, from the sudden rising of the Cauvery, induced Lord Mornington to take a decisive step, and issue a declaration of war. This was accordingly done on the 22d of February, 1799.

"In the November of the preceding year (1798) all the disposable troops had been assembled and encamped at Wallajahbad, under the orders of Colonel Wellesley, with whom the general superintendence remained until February following, when General Harris arrived to assume the personal command of the army, which had proceeded to Vellore. The attention which Colonel Wellesley had bestowed on the discipline and well-being of the troops, and in practising them in combined field movements, with the admirable system he adopted for

* Equivalent to 240,000*l.* sterling.

supplying the bazaars, which were kept constantly well provided, attracted general notice and approbation ; and when General Harris joined the army to take command, after receiving the reports of the heads of corps and departments, he was so pleased with all Colonel Wellesley's arrangements, that he conceived it to be an imperative duty to publish a general order conveying commendation of the merits of Colonel Wellesley during his temporary command."*

The "corps d'armée," directed immediately against the capital of Tippoo Sultaun, embraced the Carnatic, Cananore, and contingent of the Nizam. The Carnatic exceeded 20,000 men, of whom 4,300 were Europeans, and 2,600 cavalry. The Cananore, or western army, numbered 6,400, of whom 1,600 were Europeans. The Nizam's comprised a British detachment, serving with his Highness under Lieut.-Colonel Dalrymple, 6,500 strong ; the same number of the Nizam's infantry, and a large body of horse. The whole might be reckoned at 16,000. Besides these, the southern Carnatic, 4,000 strong, and the Baramahl corps, about 5,000, marched from their respective cantonments, to co-operate with the Commander-in-Chief. The Carnatic was under the immediate command of Lieutenant-General Harris ; the Western, or Caunanore, under General Stuart ; and that of the Nizam, under Colonel Wellesley ; the cavalry being under the prince's minister, Meer Alum.

An Indian campaign was never opened by an army in such force, or equal effectiveness. The European regiments were healthy and serviceable ; and the native troops emulated the British in gallantry, and in the hour of trial were not inferior to their European comrades either in discipline or fidelity. The organization of the Indian army was indeed perfect in every arm ; and its attachment to the British Government, most ardent. Previous to

* Wellington Despatches.

that period, the native regiments had been but partially officered by Europeans; and, excepting a captain-commandant, adjutant, surgeon, and six or eight subalterns, the duties of the battalions were generally performed by Mussulmans and Hindus. Their gallantry in the field, their obedience in camp or when marching, to the orders of their officers, and the internal harmony with which they lived among themselves, rendered these corps both manageable and trustworthy. This will appear the more remarkable, when the difference in caste, and the prejudices in religious observances, are remembered. Their composition embraced five distinct classes, each differing from the other in customs and belief; and so rooted in their mutual antipathies, that any contact with the other was regarded as pollution.

Of the castes of which the native army was, and is, composed, the most numerous are Mussulmans. They comprise four distinct sects: the Sheik, Seyd, Mogul, and Puthaun, or Pattan. In religion they are less prejudiced, and in intelligence superior to the rest of the native soldiers; and hence, they may be considered generally, as the best description of the Company's troops.

The second, and far less numerous class, are the Rajahpoots, the highest class of the Hindus. More deeply prejudiced in their notions of religion, their courage and military qualities are of the first order. Hence they make "the bravest and most devoted soldiers, far surpassing all other natives in a romantic, but sometimes mistaken notion of honour."*

The Telinga, or Gentoo, are a caste of the Hindu race. They are mild, cleanly, and faithful; but neither in intelligence nor enterprise equal to the Rajahpoots or Mussulmans.

The fourth caste are the Tamoul, or Malabar. Their character and dispositions are similar to the Telingas.

The Pariah are the fifth class: they are considered by

* Welsh.

the other castes so degraded, that it has been deemed advisable to yield to the prejudices of the many, and exclude them altogether from the line. They are, however, employed in separate services; and from them, the pioneers and gun and tent Lascars are almost entirely recruited. To the oriental offence of eating unclean food, they occasionally add the European crime of drunkenness; but in gallantry, attachment, and efficiency, this degraded caste yields to none in the Indian army.

Taken altogether, the Company's troops are brave, affectionate, and obedient; and as they have long since been fully officered by Europeans, and in improved discipline, have progressed with the British regiments *pari passu*, no army would be found more efficient in the field, than that at the present disposal of the Indian presidencies.

The army of the Carnatic, which had been concentrated at Vellore, received orders to cross the frontier of the Mysore country on the 3d of February; but preparatory arrangements for the movement of an army so large as the Madras,* delayed its march until the 11th. The contingent

* *Distances, in British miles, between the most remarkable Places of Hindustan :*

										Agra										
<i>Explanation.</i>										Benares...				380						
From Agra to Trichinopoly..... 1406										} Miles.				Bidjegur...				57	436	
Calcutta to Seringapatam... 1220														Bombay...				950	984	850
										Calcutta...				1300	621	665	950			
										Delhi...				1060	965	556	500	115		
										Hyderabad...				900	1020	480	664	745	830	
										Madras...				365	1350	1030	770	1029	1110	1190
Oude, or Fyzabad... 1170														810	360	695	1085	186	130	280
Patna... 235 1267														900	660	400	1140	196	155	545
Poona... 1067 950 670														387	915	1200	98	898	930	796
Seringapatam... 525 1215 1230 290														315	1330	1220	620	1215	1170	1215
Surat... 702 245 1020 880 930														565	756	1310	177	837	905	680
Trichinopoly... 927 225 750 1481 1275 208														540	1473	1240	845	1230	1286	1406

of the Nizam, which marched from Hyderabad on the 26th of December, had already reached Chittoor; and General Harris was particularly anxious to get forward, to unite his own with the troops of Meer Allum Behauder.* The junction was effected on the 18th at Killamungalum; and the Nizam's contingent being strengthened by the addition of the 33d European regiment, was formed into a separate corps, and the command given to Colonel Wellesley.

"General Harris was not only invested with unrestricted military command, but was empowered to exert all the civil authority which would have belonged to the Governor-General in his situation. He was further provided with a political and diplomatic commission, composed of Colonel the Hon. A. Wellesley, Lieut.-Colonel Barry Close, Lieut.-Colonel Agnew, and Captain Malcolm, with Captain Macaulay as Secretary. This commission was not, however, entitled to act, except in obedience to the orders of the General."†

The progress of the grand army was, from many causes, necessarily slow. The bullock department was found quite unequal to the duties of the commissariat; which, from the enormous number of camp followers attached to the army of the Nizam, amounting to 20,000 Brinjarries,‡ and at least as many servants, required such a supply of stores and provisions to be brought forward, as far exceeded the means of transport the greatest exertions could procure. This host of noncombatant attendants, with the immense quantity of baggage which an Indian army carries with it when it takes the field, not only embarrassed the marching of the troops, but required careful dispositions to cover it, when moving through a wooded country so favourable to desultory attacks. It has been a subject of surprise, why the Sultaun did not avail himself more of these

* *Behauder*, literally, means invincible; and is a term of high courtesy and respect.

† Wellington Despatches.

‡ *Brinjarries* are dealers in grain and rice. They follow Indian armies, with their supplies in bags, and carried by bullocks.

advantages. Without hazarding an action, he might, by constant demonstrations in front, and frequent feints upon the flanks and rear, have cut off stragglers, captured stores when loosely guarded, and seriously impeded the movement of the allies towards his capital; an occurrence particularly to be dreaded, as the rainy season might shortly be expected to set in. Beyond wasting forage and provisions, destroying villages in the line of march, and occasionally showing his light cavalry in front and flank, he made but one serious attempt, and that was on the rear-guard of the Nizam. In this he so far succeeded as to cut off some seventy of the sepoys, most of whom were killed or wounded, before prompt assistance from Colonel Wellesley repulsed the assailants, and rescued the survivors of the companies.

While the grand army was moving by Talgautporam, Kankanhilly, and Sultaunpet, to Malavelly, it will be necessary to notice briefly the earlier operations of the Sultaun. At the commencement of his march, the last letter * addressed by Lord Mornington to Tippoo, had been forwarded by General Harris. Although the concluding paragraph of the Governor-General's despatch still left negotiation open, the advance of the army showed clearly, that nothing short of unconditional submission on the Sultaun's part, could now avert hostilities. The crossing of his frontier, involved in Tippoo's mind, like the passage of the Rubicon, a succession of hasty operations, alike past remedy or recall. His capital was threatened—and he had no alternative, he considered, but to attack himself, or remain to be assailed. He chose the former—broke up from his cantonments, intending to fall with his whole force upon

* "The allies, however, retaining an anxious desire to effect an adjustment with you, Lieutenant-General Harris, commander of the British troops, has been empowered to receive any embassy which you shall despatch to him. Lieutenant-General Harris will also authorize such persons as he may think proper, to concert, in communication with your ambassadors, a new treaty of friendship with your Highness, founded on such conditions as appear to the allies to be indispensably necessary to the establishment of a secure and permanent peace."—*Letter to Tippoo, dated Fort-George, Feb. 22, 1799.*

the army of the Carnatic—but, suddenly changing his plans, he hurried with the *élite* of his infantry to meet the division of the West, which, from its inferior numbers, he calculated on easily defeating.

On the 21st of February General Stuart marched from Cananore, and reached the Poodicherrum Ghaut on the 25th. The expected arrival of the army of the Carnatic, induced the General to take a position close to the frontier; and on the 2d, his right brigade, consisting of three native battalions, commanded by Colonel Montessor, were halted at Sedaseer, near the boundary of the Coorga country, seven miles from Periapatam. The remainder of Stuart's corps, with the artillery and commissariat, were cantoned at Seedapore and Amoontoona^{*}, the one eight, and the other twelve miles, in rear of the advanced position.

This detachment of his corps by General Stuart was unavoidable, from the whole of the adjacent country being overrun with jungle.† The occupation of Sedaseer was indispensable, as it commanded a view of the Mysore country nearly to the gates of Seringapatam, and enabled the Cananore army to communicate with the Carnatic, the moment their advanced pickets should appear.

On the morning of the 5th of March, a spacious encampment with one green tent in the centre, was discovered in front of Periapatam. This circumstance of course occasioned an immediate inquiry; and hurcarras,‡ directly from Seringapatam, assured General Stuart, that the Sul-taun had moved all his effective strength “to oppose the

* *Seedapore*, a village with a dry ditch and barrier. It has also a bazaar and open *choultry*; i. e. a covered building for the accommodation of troops or travellers. *Amoontoona*, a village surrounded with ground, and having excellent water.

† “The country, from Sedaseer hither, is an almost continued jungle; I had scarcely room to encamp at Seedapore. In the neighbourhood of this place there is some cultivation; but this magnificent capital is about of the same extent, and has a similar appearance to a county town in Ireland.”—*Col. Wellesley to Lieut.-Col. Close, March 30, 1800.*

‡ Indian Couriers.

progress of the Madras army." Stuart's advanced brigade was, however, strengthened by a fourth battalion; and the 5th of April passed quietly over.

On the 6th, it was reported that Tippoo was actually in front of the right brigade at Sedaseer; and an immediate attack soon confirmed it. "A deep jungle lay between him and the British—and at nine o'clock he passed through the brushwood undiscovered, and threw himself furiously on the front and flanks of Montessor's brigade. Though surprised, and assailed under very discouraging circumstances by a force immensely superior in point of numbers, the sepoys behaved with veteran steadiness, and fought most gallantly. Every effort made by Tippoo to shake their formation failed. For five hours these native regiments sustained furious and repeated attacks unsupported; and not until Stuart, after considerable opposition from the Mysore troops who had gained the rear of Montessor, came up and relieved this hard-pressed brigade, did the fiery Suldaun desist from the assault." The loss of the British, compared with that of the Suldaun, was trifling*—the whole European and native casualties amounting only to one hundred and forty-three. "It was impossible to ascertain the exact loss sustained by the enemy; but it must have been heavy, as in the course of so long an action they were often exposed in crowds to the fire of grape-shot and volleys of musquetry. Several men of distinction were killed; and some wounded officers have been made prisoners."†

The Suldaun, after his defeat, retired hastily on Peria-

* Casualties of the Bombay army under General Stuart, in the action with Tippoo Suldaun, at Sedaseer, 6th March, 1799:—

	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		MISSING.
Europeans,	9	. .	21	. .	4
Natives,	22	. .	77	. .	12

Total, killed, wounded, and missing, 143.

Tippoo Suldaun's was estimated at 1,500.

† Stuart's Despatch to Lord Mornington.

patam; while the grand army of the Carnatic was nearing the Capital by slow and steady marches. On the 24th General Harris, having crossed the Madoor, encamped on the same ground that the Mysore forces had previously occupied, and received here an official account of Tippoo's attack on the Bombay army, and his subsequent retreat.

The intelligence of the Sultaun's discomfiture was, for many reasons, most gratifying. With every advantage that ground and numbers could bestow, he had suffered a signal defeat. He had commenced hostilities,—the result to his army was most discouraging,—and the failure of his first effort, proved but an ill-omened forerunner of the closing of his own life and dynasty!

On moving from Sultaunpet to Mallavelly on the morning of the 27th of March, the army of the Mysore was discovered in great force, posted on some high grounds to the westward of the town. At ten o'clock Tippoo opened a distant canonade, at the same time threatening with his cavalry the British pickets on the right: a supporting corps was pushed forward by General Harris, and a general action resulted. "The infantry line of the enemy was on commanding ground in rear of his artillery. His cavalry advanced under cover of his cannon, and a cutcherie or brigade of infantry was pushed forward in front of each flank of his line, mixed with many rocket-men. The right wing of the army, under my command, formed on the pickets of the right; Colonel Wellesley's division advanced from a considerable distance on the left, to attack the right flank of the enemy; and Major-General Floyd, with the 19th, and two regiments of native cavalry, moved between these corps; the 25th dragoons and a native regiment keeping in check a body of the enemy's cavalry which had assembled on our right, while the left wing of the army, and a regiment of native cavalry, remained halted to protect our stores and baggage. The weak state of the artillery bullocks considerably retarded the advance and formation of our line, with which they were unable to keep pace.

A small body of horse, profiting by this circumstance, made a daring charge on the 1st European brigade; they were received with firmness, and repulsed with considerable loss."* In deploying, from the irregularity of the ground, a space between the brigades was left unoccupied; and Tippoo considered that by this opening a cavalry attack could be attempted with success. The Sultaun's horse charged with great boldness; and "many of the light cavalry succeeded in penetrating the intervals in the British line, and passing so far beyond it as to fall in with General Harris and his staff, with some of the officers of which they even exchanged pistol-shots. It is scarcely necessary to add, that to these adventurous men there was 'no return,' and that they all paid the forfeit of their temerity with their lives."†

The brunt of the battle was principally borne by the infantry of the Nizam, and the cavalry under General Floyd, which supported them. The enemy's division exhibited considerable boldness, and advanced with a steadiness not often met with in eastern troops. The Kerim Cutcherie, the Sultaun's favourite cushoon, was particularly distinguished. Coming boldly forward, and advancing in excellent order, it halted in front of the 33d, and coolly delivered its fire: the volley was returned with effect; and Colonel Wellesley's regiment lowered their bayonets and advanced. That imposing movement, European troops have rarely withstood—Asiatic, never. The Mussulmans wavered, broke, and turned; while Floyd's cavalry dashed into their disordered ranks, and accomplished with the sabre what the bayonet would have inevitably effected.

Tippoo witnessed the destruction of his best cushoon by a corps scarcely one-third its number; and having retired his guns, abandoned the field to the conquerors. The retreat was so rapid, that the Sultaun's army were

* General Harris's Despatch, Seringapatam, 5th April, 1799

† Hook.

soon beyond the range of the British cannon ; and General Harris returned to his camp—a total want of water in his front, rendering it necessary to occupy the same ground on which his position on the preceding night had been taken.

The casualties of the allied army under general Harris, in the action with Tippoo Sultaun, were thus officially returned :—

	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		MISSING.
Europeans,	6	. .	37	. .	0
Natives,	1	. .	16	. .	6
Horses,	12	. .	33	. .	3
Total, 66 men, and 48 horses.					



CHAPTER III.

**EFFECT OF THE DEFEAT AT SEEDASEER—HARRIS CROSSES THE CAUVERY—
CAPTURE OF SOSILAY—MARCH ON SERINGAPATAM—DESCRIPTION OF THE
CITY—CITY INVESTED—SULTAUNPET UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTACKED AT NIGHT
—CARRIED BY COLONEL WELLESLEY IN THE MORNING—LETTERS OF
TIPPOO SULTAUN AND GENERAL HARRIS—SIEGE CONTINUED—FARTHER
CORRESPONDENCE — BATTERIES COMMENCE BREACHING — PREPARATIONS
FOR THE ASSAULT—TROOPS EMPLOYED—CITY TAKEN.**

THE defeat of Mallavelly, following so fast on his discomfiture at Seedaseer, had a marked effect upon a mind like Tippoo's, swayed, even in the most trifling concerns, by fortunate or unpromising commencements. His subsequent operations were marked by irresolution and bad judgment ; and from the day of his first disaster, he seemed, to use eastern phraseology, " a doomed man ;" no change in the tide of his fortunes afterwards gave a hope,—the destroying angel had got the word—and the Sultaun's days were numbered.

On the morning of the 28th of March, General Harris resumed his movements, having decided on crossing the Cauvery by the ford at Sosilay, after the country in his front had been carefully reconnoitred, and reported free from the presence of an enemy. He ascertained also, that the Sultaun had been totally mistaken as to the line of march, by which the British would approach the capital ; for, erroneously believing that the route of General Harris would be that of Arakery, he had despatched thither the main body of his army, determined to oppose their advance on his capital, by risking a decisive battle. Tippoo's

was a fatal oversight. He uncovered the best road to Seringapatam;* and, unchecked by the presence of an enemy, the march of the British divisions was leisurely effected. The villages through which they passed were stocked amply with provisions,—stacks of forage everywhere were standing in the fields,—not a musket was heard,—and the march seemed rather a military movement through a friendly country, internally at peace, than an advance upon an enemy's capital, covered by a force of 50,000 men.

On approaching the Cauvery, hundreds of the peasants, with cattle, sheep, and goats in number exceeding computation, were discovered grouped around the ditch which encircles the town of Sosilay. This unexpected addition to his commissariat, was of paramount advantage to General Harris. Abundant supplies were thus procurable from the natives, without trenching on his own stores. He could also command large resources already collected in the Coorga country, secure his convoys from the southern districts and the Barramahl; and, by holding Sosilay, keep open his communications with the army of Cananore. Leaving a battalion to protect his rear, the British General passed the river. No difficulty was experienced; for though three hundred yards in breadth, the ford across the Cauvery was scarcely three feet deep, with clear water and a hard gravelly bottom, that facilitated the passage of the guns and field equipage. It being ascertained on the 31st

* "The Sultaun, certainly, was not inactive; but his activity was misguided, and became inadequate to its object. He destroyed the villages, and laid waste the country in front of the army; but by not sufficiently spreading the tracks of devastation, his purpose for distressing our army was defeated, as General Harris, by a slight deviation from the common road, reached his destination at the time he wished, and without any material interruption. From the late plentiful rains, and the peculiar construction of the tanka, which could not be entirely drained, there was no deficiency of water; and though the usual attempts had been made to poison it, by steeping in it bruised branches of the milk hedge-tree, no very obnoxious effect was produced."—*Asiatic Register*, 1799.

that the Sultaun, with his whole cavalry, had crossed to the southern bank of the river, and despatched his guns and infantry to Seringapatam, orders were issued for marching early in the morning; and on the evening of the 1st of April, the allied army bivouacked within four leagues of the capital of Mysore.

On the following day the march was resumed, the army advancing by its left. The cavalry of the Nizam, however, delayed the general movement so much, that evening found the allies a league only in advance of their position of the preceding night. No annoyance was given by the Sultaun, although his cavalry occasionally showed themselves on some high grounds in front of the columns; and Tippoo was personally employed all day, reconnoitering his enemy from a hill that commanded a full view of the whole line of march.*

The result of the Sultaun's observation was a determination to attack the English, and hold the heights in front of their encampment. A strong body of cavalry, with twenty guns, were accordingly sent across the river, supported by an infantry corps of seventeen thousand men. But during the night Tippoo changed his intentions, withdrew the entire of his corps, and took a position under the eastern and southern faces of the fort, destroying first the pettahs; anticipating, as it would appear, a similar method of approach to that, by which Lord Cornwallis had invested Seringapatam in 1792. But the point chosen by the engineers for their operations was the north-west angle of the place; and on the junction of the Bombay army, on the evening of the 14th, with that of the Carnatic and Nizam, the siege was vigorously carried on.

The capital of the Mysore country is situated in lat. $12^{\circ}26'$ N. $76^{\circ}51'$ E. It is 1170 miles distant from Calcutta, 622 from Bombay, and 200 from Madras. The city stands on the angle of an island, formed by the junction

* "By reports from his camp, we learnt that he was extremely dejected and undetermined; and that plans of defence had been suddenly formed, and as suddenly abandoned."—*Beatson*.

of the rivers Cauvery and Coleroon. Its appearance was extremely imposing, as the works were of immense extent, and unnecessarily massive in their construction. The fort was encompassed with two distinct walls, each having ditches, bastions, and a number of cavaliers*—a species of defence, in great favour with Indian engineers. On the different faces of the fort, the gates were secured by numerous outworks. As a fortress, Seringapatam was generally strong; but an immensity of labour and materials had been expended in useless and ill-designed defences. Within the walls two buildings were very remarkable,—the palace of the Sultaun, and the beautiful mosque near the Bangalore-gate, from whose lofty and elegant minarets the country for many miles was visible.

The houses of Seringapatam were very spacious, and well constructed; but the interior embellishments without variety, and as gaudy as blended colours and gilding could make them. The situation of the ancient capital of the Mysore dominions, must have been originally chosen on account of its strength, as its district was naturally barren. It was indebted for its population and fertility to the most persevering industry, in procuring the means of watering it. The water-courses from the river, as well as the distant lakes and tanks, in all directions, were stupendous works—the principal ones finished with stone, and having bridges at convenient intervals.

The island† contained many objects of interest and beauty. In the Laul Baugh, on the eastern side, were a palace and gardens, used occasionally as a royal residence, with the magnificent mausoleum of black granite, in which the ashes of Hyder Ally were deposited. Another palace and garden were at Dowlat Baugh, immediately on the banks

* Mounds or elevations in a fortress, which overlook and command the works immediately around them.

† "A space of land opposite to the island, is enclosed within what is called a bound hedge, or fringe of bamboo jungle. This jungle is the limit of the capital, and moreover offers shelter to the people of the country, being on the outer side, from incursions of predatory cavalry."—*Hook*.

of the river, and a town (Shahrgaujam Pett), with a wealthy and extensive population. This place was particularly unhealthy; and Seringapatam, from its general insalubrity, no doubt added to the confidence of the Sultaun. Obligated to canton his own troops at a distance from the place, except when an enemy was immediately before the fortress, he calculated on its proving fatal to Europeans; and that circumstance, in a great degree, confirmed him in the obstinate belief that his capital would prove impregnable.

The army had encamped at a distance of 3500 paces from the western face of the works, having on the right, the contingent of the Nizam, *en potence*, resting on a height, and the extreme left on the Cauvery. In front, there were several ruined villages and rising grounds, with an aqueduct running in an easterly direction, within 1700 yards of the fort, and winding towards the right, until it reached a wooded tope, called the Sultaun-pet. The whole of this ground was broken and irregular, affording to Tippoo's skirmishers and rocket-men a safe cover, from which the advanced pickets could be seriously annoyed. Otherwise the British camp was favourably situated—five large topes of cocoa, areka, bamboo, and other trees, furnished within the lines an abundant stock of materials for a siege,—an advantage no other position near Seringapatam could have afforded. The place was now tolerably healthy; the water pure and abundant; and it possessed all the security of an entrenched camp.

From the facility which the Sultaun-pet and adjacent enclosures offered the Sultaun's troops of annoyance, the broken ground in front of the position was examined by General Baird with a part of his brigade, on the night of the 5th. The whole was found unoccupied; and the general returned to the camp, "after scouring the tope in all directions," and without discovering an enemy.

Aware of its advantages, the Mussulmans, early on the ensuing morning, reoccupied the tope and ruined village, from both of which they kept up a teasing fusilade, with

an occasional discharge of rockets. Some of the latter fell within the tents of the British encampment—and it became advisable to dislodge the enemy from the whole line of posts which they had formed amongst the enclosures.

The command of the troops was given to Colonel Wellesley; and the 33d and 2d Bengal regiments, with the 12th and two battalions of sepoy, under Colonel Shaw, assembled at nightfall, and advanced, the one against the tope, and the other to seize the aqueduct and ruined village. Both these services were partially achieved; Colonel Shaw carried and held the village, and Colonel Wellesley forced the enclosure of the tope. The enemy, anticipating the attack, had however strengthened their posts, and immediately opened a tremendous fire of musquetry and rockets. The night was extremely dark, and the interior of the tope, everywhere intersected with canals for irrigating the betel plants, confused the assailants, and rendered, in the deep obscurity, any advance impracticable. No alternative was left, but to retire the troops, and remove them out of fire. Unfortunately, twelve of the grenadier company of the 33d lost their way, and were made prisoners; and Colonel Wellesley, who was far advanced in the tope, was struck on the knee by a spent ball, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy, having wandered for several hours in the darkness, before he could regain the camp.

On the following morning General Harris directed the attack to be renewed. To Colonel Wellesley the assault upon the Sultaun-pet was again entrusted; while Colonel Shaw was directed to drive the enemy from the aqueduct, and Colonel Wallace to seize, with the flank companies of the 14th and two companies of sepoy, a strong village which protected the right flank of the enemy's posts.

The combined attack was crowned with perfect success. After a few rounds from his guns, Colonel Wellesley pushed boldly forward, entered the tope, and, having already turned it in flank, drove out the enemy, and obliged them to retire with some loss, and in great disorder. Shaw's attack on

the village, assisted by Colonel Wallace, who had succeeded in his object, was bravely executed: and that once seized, enabled the assailants to attack the aqueduct, the enemy's strongest hold. The attempt was made in gallant style, and the Sultaun's troops were driven from all the enclosures they had strengthened, and from which they had previously caused a very serious annoyance. The enemy were thus obliged to abandon the whole line of their defences, which, reaching from the tope to the river, formed a chain of posts nearly two miles in extent.

The Sultaun, alarmed by the closer investment of the fortress, either to ascertain the exact objects of the besiegers, or delay their operations, despatched a vakeel on the 9th, with the following letter to General Harris.

“The Governor-General, Lord Mornington Bahander, sent me a letter, the copy of which is enclosed—you will understand it. I have adhered firmly to treaties. What, then, is the meaning of the advance of the English armies, and the occurrence of hostilities? Inform me. What need I say more?”

A brief and unsatisfactory reply was returned next morning, by the Commander-in-Chief.

“April 10, 1799.

“Your letter, enclosing copies of the Governor-General's letter, has been received. For the advance of the English and allied armies, and for the occurrence of hostilities, I refer you to the several letters of the Governor-General, which are sufficiently explanatory of the subject. What need I say more?”

Probably despairing of effecting any thing by diplomacy when an enemy appeared conscious of his strength, and determined to permit no overtures, however specious, to divert him from following up his opening successes, Tippoo discontinued his correspondence with General Harris.

Immediately after establishing his posts in front of Seringapatam, the Commander-in-Chief detached General Floyd, with four regiments of cavalry (one European), and five battalions of infantry, and 2000 of the Nizam's horse, to Periapatam, to unite with the Bombay army, and secure its advance. The service was ably executed, and the junction with General Stuart effected safely, on the 10th.

Both these armies, with large supplies, having safely reached head-quarters, the siege was vigorously pressed on. A sortie, made on the morning of the 22d, had been repulsed; and a parallel opened within 750 paces of the works. The progress of the batteries was rapid; the approaches had reached within 200 paces of an entrenchment, still in possession of the enemy; and, on the 26th, General Harris determined to drive them from that post, as a preparatory step to a closer investment of the fortress.

Colonel Wellesley, commanding in turn of duty in the trenches, was ordered to direct the attack; and proper dispositions were accordingly made to storm the entrenchments at sunset.

The troops ordered for the assault moved forward in two columns. During the previous hour, the fire of the English batteries had been turned entirely on the enemy's works, and, ceasing when the advance of the storming party was observed, it was then directed on an angle of the fort, from whose guns the assailants had most annoyance to apprehend.

The attack had been arranged with excellent judgment, and was most gallantly executed. The entrenchments were stormed, occupied by the assailants, and, before daylight, tolerably secured from the fire of the place.

Although his previous attempt at negotiation had been so brief and unsuccessful, the alarming position in which he was placed became every day more apparent to the Sul-taun, and induced him to resort to diplomacy again. On the 20th he thus addressed the Commander-in-Chief:—

“In the letter of Lord Mornington it is written, that the clearing up of matters at issue is proper, and that,

therefore, you having been empowered for the purpose, will appoint such persons as you judge proper for conducting a conference, and renewing the business of a treaty. You are the well-wisher of both Sircars. In this matter, what is your pleasure? Inform me, that a conference may take place. What can I say more?"

To the Sultaun's letter, General Harris replied on the 22d. He accompanied his answer, with a copy of terms on which a treaty should be based. The French were to be sent, within forty-eight hours, to the British camp; half his dominions to be surrendered, the allies to select the moiety they pleased; all disputed claims to be relinquished on the Sultaun's part; a free communication with the Carnatic and coast of Malabar, to be guaranteed; all prisoners released; and, lastly, a payment of two crores of sicca rupees made by two instalments, one in money or bullion on the spot, and the other in six months from the signing of the treaty. As security for due fulfilment of all these articles, four of Tippoo's sons, with four of his chief sirdars, were demanded as hostages.

To these demands the Sultaun returned no answer. The siege was progressive; and the success of the attack on the evening of the 26th upon the entrenchments, probably influenced Tippoo, who saw that the crisis of his fate was hurrying on with ominous rapidity, to make another effort to avert a catastrophe that now appeared almost inevitable. On the morning of the 28th, a vakeel reached the tent of the Commander-in-Chief, bearing the following epistle from the Sultaun:—

"I have the pleasure of your friendly letter, and understand its contents. The points in question are weighty, and without the intervention of ambassadors, cannot be brought to a conclusion; I am, therefore, about to send two gentlemen to you, and have no doubt that a conference will take place; they will personally explain themselves to you. What more can I write?"

The letter bore evident marks of haste, and had neither date nor address. The reply of General Harris was a simple reference to his former communication to the Sul-taun, accompanied by an intimation, that no vakeel need present himself again, unless to deliver the hostages and specie. The siege operations had nearly reached comple-tion, the Sul-taun's overtures never having caused their relaxation for a moment.

"On the 30th a battery was unmasked, and commenced breaching the bastion †; and on the 2d of May another was completed, and opened a heavy fire on the curtain to the right. Several guns of large calibre were gradually got to work; and the old masonry, unable to support this well-served and sustained cannonade, began to yield. Masses of the wall came down into the ditch. A breach in the *fausse-braye** was reported practicable—and on the 3d of May, the face of the bastion was in such a state of ruin, that preparations were made for an immediate assault; and in a brief letter, orders to that effect were given next morning to Major-General Baird, who had volunteered to command the storming party."

The troops ordered for the assault were composed of Europeans and natives. They were selected from the armies of the three Presidencies, with 200 of the Nizam's contingent: the whole amounting to 4476. The right column, under Colonel Sherbrooke, consisted of the flank companies of the Scotch brigade, and De Meuron's regi-ment; the King's 73d and 74th; eight companies of coast, and six of Bombay, sepoys; with 50 artillerymen, and a detachment of gun lascars. The left column, under Lieu-tenant-Colonel Dunlop, comprised six European flank-companies of the Bombay army, the King's 12th and 33d regiments, ten flank-companies of sepoys, and 50 artillery-

* The *fausse-braye* is an outer work, for securing the covered way and fosse. It has generally a *terre-plein*, of 16 to 24 feet, nearly level with the field, and defended by a parapet. *Bastions* form the angular portions of a fortification; and *curtains* are the connecting walls, which unite them with each other.



D. Baird

London: J. H. E. 1857

men and their gun lascars. The whole were placed before daylight in the trenches, and noon was properly chosen as the best hour of attack.

“At one o'clock the troops moved from the trenches—crossed the rocky bed of the Cauvery, under an extremely heavy fire—passed the glacis and ditch—and ascended the breaches in the *fausse-braye*, and rampart of the fort; surmounting, in the most gallant manner, every obstacle which the difficulty of the passage and the resistance of the enemy presented to oppose their progress. Major-General Baird had divided his force, for the purpose of clearing the ramparts to the right and left; one division was commanded by Colonel Sherbrooke, the other by Lieutenant-Colonel Dunlop; the latter was disabled in the breach, but both corps, although strongly opposed, were completely successful.”*

Although the river had been carefully examined during the preceding night, and the proper place, by which the troops should effect their passage, marked out by inserting stakes in the sand, Sherbrooke's column, swerving to the right, got into deep water, and the progress of the whole was retarded. Baird, observing the difficulty, rushed on close to the forlorn hope—cheered the men forward—and, in six minutes, the British colours were flying above the breach.

So far the assault had been successful:—“the breach was won;” and the assailants, flushed with earlier advantage, pressed boldly forward; while the defenders, partially taken by surprise, were astounded to see the Cauvery crossed with little loss, and the rampart carried without a check. But unforeseen difficulties were behind, which accident fortunately assisted British valour to surmount.

“When General Baird had reached the top of the breach, he discovered, to his inexpressible surprise, a second ditch, full of water, within the outer wall. The almost insur-

* Despatch of General Harris.

mountable difficulty of overcoming this unexpected impediment, staggered him, and he exclaimed, 'Good God! how shall we get over this?' Fortunately, however, in leading the troops along the ramparts, he discovered some scaffolding which had been raised for the use of the workmen who had been repairing the wall. Having immediately taken advantage of the opportunity which thus luckily presented itself, he crossed the inner ditch, and proceeded by the ramparts to the other side of the fort, where the two columns were to meet, and enter the body of the town."*

To those looking on, and who neither shared in the glory nor the danger of the assault, the period of suspense, though brief, was most distressing. A field-officer, recently dead, thus describes the feelings of the troops who were watching the result of the storm.

"About a quarter past one P.M., as we were anxiously peering, telescope in hand, at the ford, and the intermediate ground between our batteries and the breach, a sharp and sudden discharge of musquetry and rockets, along the western face of the fort, announced to us that General Baird and the column of assault were crossing the ford; and immediately afterwards, we perceived our soldiers, in rather loose array, rushing towards the breach. The moment was one of agony; and we continued, with aching eyes, to watch the result, until, after a short and appalling interval, we saw the acclivity of the breach covered with a cloud of crimson,—and in a very few minutes afterwards, observing the files passing rapidly to the right and left at the summit of the breach, I could not help exclaiming, 'Thank God! the business is done.'"

"The firing continued in different parts of the place until about two o'clock, or a little afterwards; when, the whole of the works being in the possession of our troops, and the St. George's ensign floating proudly from the flag-staff of the southern cavalier, announced to us that the triumph was completed."†

* Hook's Life of Baird.

† Price.

The capture of the ramparts and cavaliers, and their immediate occupation by the fresh battalions, who followed to support the storming parties, rendered success certain. To refresh the troops, and prevent unnecessary slaughter by an immediate assault upon the palace, where Tippoo was supposed to have retired, and which "would be as gallantly defended as attacked," Baird gave orders to suspend further operations for a short period. During this halt, two battalions of sepoy came up; the storming parties were sufficiently refreshed; the Sultaun had time allowed him, to see how bootless any farther resistance must prove; and Major Allan was despatched with a flag of truce, to demand an unconditional surrender of the palace and all that it contained.



CHAPTER IV.

**TIPPOO APPRIZED OF THE ASSAULT—HIS CONDUCT AND DEATH—THE BODY
BOUGHT FOR, FOUND, AND DEPOSITED IN THE PALACE—ANECDOTES—
TREASURY ROBBED—TIPPOO'S CRUELTY—HARRIS'S FIRST DESPATCH—THE
SULTAUN'S FUNERAL—ANECDOTES—PROPERTY AND TREASURE FOUND IN
THE CAPITAL—REVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN.**

To the last hour of his life, the Sultaun would never believe that Seringapatam could be carried by assault, and that the attempt would be made in open day. Although the troops chosen for the attack, had been marched to the trenches before there was sufficient light to betray the movement of a body of such unusual strength, it was impossible to conceal them altogether from the enemy's view, and Meer Ghoffar reported the circumstance to his master. Tippoo coldly noticed the intelligence, and took no measures to oppose an attack, which the sirdar assured him might be momentarily apprehended. The Sultaun resumed his seat; in a few minutes a breathless messenger informed him that the columns were crossing the river; and the roar of cannon and musquetry confirmed the fatal news.

“Rising from table, where dinner had been laid under a thatched shed on the northern face of the works, he performed his ablutions coolly, and called for his horse and arms. At that moment the death of his best officer, Meer Ghoffar, was announced. The Sultaun paid a tribute to the bravery of his favourite, named his successor, and rode forth never to return.”

Having reached the inner wall, Tippoo gave his horse to an attendant, and mounting the ramparts, placed himself

behind a traverse that commanded the approaches from the breach. His servants were provided with carbines, which they occasionally handed to their master, who fired repeatedly at the assailants, and, as it was asserted afterwards, with fatal effect. But the storming party, having carried part of the ramparts, were actually entering the body of the place, and the Sultaun was obliged to retire hastily, accompanied by his personal attendants.

“Fatigued, suffering from intense heat, and pained by an old wound, Tippoo mounted his horse, and retreated slowly along the northern rampart. The British were momentarily gaining ground, the garrison in every direction flying, while a spattering fusilade, and occasionally a wild huzza, told that the victors were everywhere advancing. Instead of quitting the city, as he might have done, the Sultaun crossed the bridge over the inner ditch, and entered the town. The covered gateway was now crowded with fugitives, vainly endeavouring to escape from the bayonets of their conquerors, who were heard approaching at either side. A random shot struck the Sultaun: he pressed his horse forward, but his passage was impeded by a mob of runaways, who literally choked the gloomy arch. Presently, a cross fire opened, and filled the passage with the dead and wounded. Tippoo’s horse was killed, but his followers managed to disengage him, dragged him exhausted from beneath the fallen steed, and placed him in his palanquin. But escape was impossible; the British were already in the gateway; the bayonet was unsparingly at work, for quarter at this moment was neither given nor expected. Dazzled by the glittering of his jewelled turban, a soldier dashed forward and caught the Sultaun’s sword-belt. With failing strength Tippoo cut boldly at his assailant, and inflicted a trifling wound. The soldier, irritated by pain, drew back, laid his musket to his shoulder, and shot the Sultaun dead. His companions, perceiving the struggle, rushed up; the palanquin was overturned, the bearers cut down, the body of the departed tyrant thrown upon a heap

of dead and dying, and the corpse, despoiled of every thing valuable, left among the fallen Mussulmans—naked, unknown, and unregarded.”

Soon after this catastrophe had occurred, Major Allan, having proceeded to the palace, found part of the 33d regiment under arms before the gateway, and some of the family of the Sultaun in the balcony above, in a state of dreadful alarm. On being admitted by the Killedar, and introduced to Tippoo's sons, the Major endeavoured to remove their apprehensions, by an assurance that he would remain with them himself, and secure them from danger. Presently General Baird was announced; and after confirming Major Allan's promise of protection, he inquired “where the Sultaun was?” The princes declared themselves ignorant of every thing respecting their father, from the time he quitted the pandal* for the ramparts; but, supposing that Tippoo might be still concealed within the palace, the General commenced a careful search, a guard having been previously placed around the Zenana, to protect the women and prevent the Sultaun's escape, should he have retired thither for security.

But the search was discontinued. The Killedar reluctantly informed General Baird and Colonel Wellesley, that it was reported his master had been wounded in the northern gateway of the fort, and that he was still lying there; and volunteered to conduct them to the spot.

On arriving at the place, the entrance was found choked with the dead and dying; and from the number of corpses heaped irregularly around, it was necessary to remove numbers of the slain Mussulmans—a disgusting and tedious operation. The light had failed,—the archway was low and gloomy,—and torches were obtained. Presently, the Sultaun's horse was recognised by the Killedar; his palanquin was afterwards discovered; a further search proved successful, and the body itself was found. The heat had

* The oriental term for an open shed.

not yet left the corpse; and though despoiled of sword and belt, sash and turban,* the well-known talisman that encircled his right arm, was easily recognised by the Killedar. The amulet, formed of some metallic substance of silvery hue, was surrounded by magic scrolls in Arabic and Persian characters, and sewed carefully in several pieces of richly-flowered silk. The eyes were unclosed; the countenance wearing that appearance of stern composure, that induced the lookers-on for a time to fancy, that the proud spirit of the haughty Sultaun was still lingering in its tenement of clay. The pulse was examined—its throbs were ended, and life was totally extinct.

Colonel Wellesley, who accompanied General Baird to the gateway of the fort, could not be persuaded, after the body was identified, that the Sultaun was not still alive, so remarkably placid was the expression of his features, and so life-like the appearance of his eyes; and until the Colonel had pressed the heart and pulse with his fingers, he doubted that the tiger-spirit had escaped.

The corpse was placed in his own palanquin; and, covered by a shawl, was carried into the court of the palace, and there deposited for the night. One of the humblest couches was the last resting-place on which the son of Hyder was permitted to repose; and even there, it was subjected to what, in a Mussulman's eyes, would appear the greatest degradation. The late Major Price thus describes the scene and the occurrence:—

“In one of the common short doolies intended for women, with his knees bent upwards, nearly double, I beheld the lifeless remains of the late dreaded Sultaun. He had been shot, a little above the right ear, by a

* “When the Sultaun left the palace, he was dressed in a light-coloured jacket, wide trousers of fine coloured silk, a sash of dark red silky stuff, and a turban with one or two distinguishing ornaments. He wore his sword in a rich belt slung over his shoulder, and a small cartridge-box hung to another embroidered belt, thrown over his left shoulder; the talisman was fastened under his jacket on his right arm.”—*Beatson*.

musket-ball, which lodged in his left cheek, near the mouth; and there were also three bayonet wounds in his right side. . . . While looking on, an officer carelessly asked me if I would lend him my penknife, which I accordingly did; and before I could recollect myself, he had cut off one of the Sultaun's mustachios."^a

During the evening, the young princes had been removed for security from the city to the British camp; and precautionary measures were taken by General Baird, to restrain violence and plundering, and restore tranquillity. The 33d and 74th regiments were quartered within the palace; sentries placed around the Zenana; a guard mounted over the treasury; while the General stretched himself on a carpet, and slept as soundly as if no unusual event had been transacted. "There lay the conqueror of Seringapatam, surrounded by his victorious soldiers, and dispensing protection to the helpless family of the fallen Sultaun. There he lay, on whose breath hung life and death. Yet but a few years back, and within three hundred yards of the spot he rested on, that man had occupied a dungeon, dragging on a cheerless captivity, and waiting until the poisoned cup should be presented by 'the bondsman of a slave,' or the order delivered for his midnight murder."

As might have been expected after the storming of a defended place, the troops indulged in licentiousness and revelry—and during the night, there were frequent alarms, many of them, of course, groundless. At one time, it was reported that the city was on fire; at another, that the soldiers were murdering the inhabitants. Presently, the General was awakened, and informed by an officer that the treasury of the late Sultaun, was at that moment being plundered. The intelligence was true. The door, generally used, had been duly provided with a guard; but the discovery of a private entrance enabled the plunderers to gain access to the treasure. When Colonel Wallace reached

* Price.

the spot, he found the place crowded with soldiers, who were carrying off quantities of jewels and gold coin. Of course, prompt measures were used to recover the stolen valuables, and secure the place from any future attempt; but no estimate could be formed of the property that had been abstracted; and, from circumstances which afterwards transpired, the loss of treasure, on this occasion, must have been enormous.*

The morning of the 4th saw the green-streaked banner of the Sultaun,† expanded from the loftiest flag-staff of the fort. On the 5th, the British ensign was floating proudly on the breeze; for that sun had risen upon a captured city, a routed host, and a dead tyrant; and an empire, acquired by a father's usurpation, was extinguished in the bloody grave of a more perfidious son. "The tyrant of Mysore was gone to his account; and, assuredly, a more tiger-hearted monster never disgraced the musnud. His conduct to his European prisoners, after Hyder's death, was atrocious. Of those taken with Bailey, the greater proportion perished from starvation and disease: while Matthews, and his officers, all of whom had surrendered under the usual conditions of honourable warfare, were treated with barbarous inhumanity; and, with few exceptions, all were murdered in detail." His truculence ended only with his life; and his last acts were in fit keeping with a career marked all through by treachery and blood.

* "The loss to the captors could never be ascertained, while but little advantage accrued to the soldiers. Dr. Mein, of the medical department, purchased from a private of the 74th regiment, for a mere trifle, two pair of solid gold bangles, or bracelets, set with diamonds: the least costly of which was valued by a Hyderabad jeweller at eighty thousand sultaunies, or thirty-two thousand pounds sterling; the other pair he declared of such superlative value, that he would not venture an opinion." . . . "It was moreover notorious, that a quantity of the most valuable pearls were bought frequently in the bazaars, from the soldiery, for a bottle of spirits."—*Price*.

† "May the 3d.—The Sultaun, as usual, displayed his flag this morning. It was a large square flag, of light green, with a blazing sun in the centre, set off with the bubbery, or tiger streak, on the sides and angles."—*Ibid*.

On the night when Colonel Wellesley's attack failed on the Sultaunpet, in the darkness and confusion, twelve of the 33d lost their way in the betel-tope, and were made prisoners. When brought into Seringapatam, it might have been supposed that the presence of a victorious army, would have insured them the common usage that civilized warfare requires. But the tiger-like ferocity of the Sul-taun was superior even to his fears; and, with a terrible and immediate vengeance impending, he slaughtered the ill-fated victims. They were murdered "by threes" at midnight. "No hurried act of fury,—no frensied ebullition of despair,—pleads in extenuation of the ruffian act. Night after night, his victims were taken from their cells; and while he husbanded his means of hellish gratification, he varied the method of his murders. One mode of killing them was by twisting their heads, while their bodies were held fast, thus breaking their necks."* For this purpose, the Sul-taun's jetties were employed—a caste of Hindus, who perform feats of strength. Others were dispatched "by having nails driven through their skulls."†

During his halt upon the ramparts, Baird was informed of the death of the prisoners by the Adjutant-General; and a native officer, who accompanied Colonel Close, confirmed the horrid statement. In an honest burst of indignation, the General declared to Colonel Wallace, that on ascertaining if the fact were so, "he would deliver Tippoo over to be dealt with by the grenadiers of the 33d." His despatch, addressed to General Harris, confirms the statement; for, after alluding to the murder of the prisoners, he adds, that he immediately advanced—determined, and most justly, "to sacrifice the tyrant to their manes!"

Immediately on ascertaining the capture of the city, General Harris despatched a brief letter to Lord Mornington. Great difficulty occurred in effecting its safe transmission, as the country between Seringapatam and Fort

* Macleod's Report.

† Baird's Despatch to Harris.

George was overrun by the adherents of the dead Sultaun, and hordes of those irregular banditti, who infest in India the routes contiguous to scenes of war, and consequently to scenes of plunder. The letter, however, was conveyed safely to its destination. It was hidden in a sealed quill,—entrusted to a native courier—and on the 11th, it reached the Governor-General.

"Camp, Seringapatam, May 4, 1799.

"MY LORD,

"I have the pleasure to inform you, that this day, at one o'clock, a division of the army under my command assaulted Seringapatam; and that at half-past two o'clock the place was completely in our possession. Tippoo Sultaun fell in the assault. Two of his sons, the Sultaun Padsha, and Mayen ud Deen, are prisoners, with many of the principal sirdars. Our success has been complete; I will forward to your Lordship details hereafter.*

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"G. HARRIS."

On the morning of the 5th, Colonel Wellesley relieved General Baird, and took command of the fortress. "Cowle-flags† were hoisted," and notice given, that severe examples would be made of any persons detected in plundering houses or molesting the inhabitants. Four men were executed for marauding; and this well-timed severity, and the extreme activity of Colonel Wellesley, speedily

* In a general return, afterwards transmitted, of the killed, wounded, and missing, from the 4th of April to the 4th of May, both days included, the total loss was:—

	KILLED.		WOUNDED.		MISSING.
Europeans,	203	. .	622	. .	23
Natives,	119	. .	420	. .	100
	<hr/> 322		<hr/> 1,042		<hr/> 122

Grand total loss, from the investment to the capture of Seringapatam, 1,436.

† *Cowle*,—literally, mercy, quarter.

restored confidence and good order.* Those who had fled from the city during the night of the storm, took courage and returned. The bazaars were promptly opened for the sale of merchandise and provisions; and three days after the fall of Seringapatam, the main street was so crowded as to become almost impassable; and the town exhibited rather the appearance of an eastern fair, than a place so recently carried by assault.

Early on the morning after the assault, Tippoo's second son, Abdul Khalic, surrendered himself, was conducted immediately to the camp, and delivered up to General Harris. He was assured of kind and honourable treatment; and, while to the living a promise of clemency was held out, the dead were protected from indignity. The corpse of the deceased Sultaun was given to his Mussulman attendants, to be prepared in proper form for the tomb; and on the same evening, it was laid beside his father's ashes, with the usual solemnities which distinguish the funerals of the rulers of the Mysore. The bier was supported by the attendants of the late court, preceded by two companies of English grenadiers, and followed by a similar force. Abdul

* The following brief communications to General Harris, indicate that activity and decision, for which the Duke from boyhood had always been remarkable.

" 10 A.M., 5th May.

" We are in such confusion still, that I recommend it to you not to come in till to-morrow, or, at soonest, late this evening."

" Half-past Twelve.

" I wish you would send the provost here, and put him under my orders. Until some of the plunderers are hanged, it is vain to expect to stop the plunder."

" 5th May.

" Things are better than they were, but they are still very bad; and until the provost executes three or four people, it is impossible to expect order, or indeed safety."

" 6th May.

" Plunder is stopped; the fires are all extinguished; and the inhabitants are returning to their houses fast. I am now employed in burying the dead, which I hope will be completed this day, particularly if you send me all the pioneers.

(Signed)

" ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

Khalic followed the corpse on horseback, attended by the Killadar and other officers on foot. The cauzee chanted some verses from the Koran, which were repeated by the attendants. The streets were thronged with the inhabitants, the greater part of whom prostrated themselves before the earthly remains of their late monarch and master. At the entrance of the town, Behauder Meer Allum, and the chiefs of the Nizam's army, after paying their respects to the prince, fell into the procession: when, having reached Hyder's mausoleum, the grenadiers formed a street and presented arms. The burial service having been performed, a keerout, or charitable gift of five thousand rupees, was distributed by the cauzee to the different *facquirs*, and the poor who attended the funeral.*

The evening on which the tomb closed upon the dust of the departed Sultaun, was marked by a storm of uncommon violence. It came on suddenly; a torrent of rain fell from the clouds; peal after peal, thunder shook the city to its very foundations, and the sky seemed literally in a blaze. Even in that climate the tempest was remarkable for its fury, and seemed as if an elemental convulsion had been decreed, to announce that the once haughty tyrant of the Mysore, was nothing now but dust and ashes!

The Sultaun was of low stature, corpulent, with high shoulders, and a short thick neck; but his feet and hands were remarkably small. His complexion was rather dark, his eyes large and prominent, with small arched eyebrows, and an aquiline nose. He had an appearance of dignity, or rather sternness, in his countenance, which distinguished him above the common order of his people.†

Although a strict Mussulman, a rigid prohibitor of wine, and an excellent hater of infidels, he was deeply imbued with superstition, and lacked the blind reliance in fatality, that a faithful Naib should have possessed. The doom of the empire and himself had been pronounced,—

* Beatson.

† Ibid.

and, to avert the impending calamity, he had recourse to magic rites and unholy associates, from which a true believer should have recoiled. He presented the Brahmin priests with a curious oblation, consisting of an elephant and goat, money, buffaloes, and cloth dresses; and this to obtain their interposition with the gods, to avert danger, and appease the wrath of Heaven.

Among other partialities, one remarkable in the Sultaun, was his fondness for tigers. After his usurpation, Hyder adopted an elephant as his crest; but Tippoo, on coming to the musnud, selected an animal in disposition far more congenial to his own. On every thing about the palace the tiger was emblazoned. The royal banner was marked with the *bubber-streak**—the cipher on his arms, *Assud oola ul Ghaulib*,—"the lion of God is the conqueror," was formed of Arabic characters, so disposed as to represent a tiger's face; and the throne was sculptured richly with a similar device.† A number of these animals were chained in the court-yard of the palace. In writing to General Harris, the day after the capture of Seringapatam, Colonel Wellesley says, "There are some tigers here, which I wish Meer Allum would send for, or else I must give orders to have them shot, as there is no food for them, nobody to attend them, and they are getting violent." Subsequently, they were destroyed, and some danger occurred in dispatching them.

The Sultaun was passionately fond of horses.‡ "He was an excellent rider, made his journeys usually on horse-back, disapproving of palanquins, hackaries, and all such conveyances, as only fit for women." But war was his chief delight;—waking or sleeping, it seemed ever up-

* *Bubber* is one of the eastern names for a tiger.

† "On an iron stay, curving over from the hinder part of the platform, was to be fixed the *Homai*, or *Phoenix*, also covered with gold, and thickly set with jewels. This (the throne) was sold, unbroken, to General Gent, of the Engineers, for about 2,500*l.*; the gold, not included in the purchase, producing nearly 25,000*l.*"—*Price*.

‡ *Beatson*.

permost in his thoughts. During peace, his attendants asserted that he was ever restless and uncomfortable ; and they frequently overheard him say, that " he would rather live two days like a tiger, than two hundred years like a lamb."

In the disposal of his time, Tippoo was very systematic. He rose generally at break of day ; and after being shampooed and rubbed, he washed himself carefully, and read the Koran for an hour. He then gave audience to officers, civil and military ; and afterwards spent half an hour in inspecting the Jamdar Khana. Upon his return he breakfasted ; and his three younger children, attended by their Moonshee,* were generally at table with their father. The remainder of the day was consumed in inspecting troops, and examining his arsenals ; and very little of the Sultaun's time spent in visits to the Zenana.

The Jamdar Khana was evidently the Sultaun's favourite lounge ; and the place is thus described by a person who visited it immediately after the capture of the city. It consisted of a succession of quadrangles, with ranges of store-houses, and galleries filled with those articles which were the least susceptible of injury. The jewels were kept in large dark rooms, strongly secured behind one of the dur-bars, and deposited in coffers. In the same manner was preserved the greater part of the gold plate, both solid and in filagree ; of which last manufacture, there was an almost endless variety of the most beautiful articles. The jewelry was set in gold, in the form of bracelets, rings, necklaces, aigrettes, plumes, &c. &c. An upper and very long apartment contained the silver plate, solid and filagree, of all dimensions and fashions. In one of the galleries, were two elephant howders, entirely of this metal. There were also many pieces of massive silver plate, richly inlaid with gold, and a few with gold and jewels. Two of the most capital articles, were deposited in two small rooms on either side of

* *Moonshee* means a letter-writer, tutor, or secretary.

the hall of audience. The one was a throne, estimated at a lack of pagodas, and the other a howder, of equal value. The repositories of curious and costly fire-arms and swords, were equally astonishing; some of the latter most magnificently adorned with gold and jewels; the greatest part of these had been presents, and several of them were of English manufacture. Among the palanquins of state, were found those which had been presented by the Marquis Cornwallis to the two young princes, when hostages with him, and they appeared never to have been unpacked. There were also several door-posts of ivory, of exquisite workmanship. To this succession of treasure may be added, various extensive warehouses filled with the richest furniture, and most costly carpets. In short, there was every thing that power could command, or money could purchase, in this stupendous collection. Telescopes of every size, spectacles for every sight, with looking-glasses and pictures in unbounded profusion; while of china and glass ware, there was sufficient to form a large mercantile magazine. But amidst the confusion that appeared in the arrangement, there was an unexpected degree of regularity; the whole being accurately registered, and every article bearing its correspondent label.

The Sultaun dressed plainly, always wearing a sabre of beautiful workmanship, with a dagger in his girdle. His turban was ornamented with a splendid jewel; and his ring contained a ruby of inestimable value. He carried also a sort of rosary formed of a string of pearls. These were indeed jewels above price; for their number being limited, whenever a more precious gem could be obtained, one of inferior value was displaced, and the more costly pearl substituted. All were upon his person when he fell; and none of them was ever afterwards recovered.

The Sultaun's diet was of the simplest kind—nuts, almonds, fruit, jelly, and milk, were what he principally used. At his meals, he recited passages from oriental poets and historians, or amused himself with sarcasms upon

caufers* and other enemies of the state. After he had dismissed those who were present at the repast, he continued walking until he found himself inclined to rest; then, lying down upon his woollen† mattress, he read himself to sleep, the book being generally some treatise on history or religion.

The Sultaun always employed a moonshee, or secretary, to write his letters or despatches, he dictating their contents; and they were generally thus concluded:—

“Dated the 17th of Rehmony of the year Saud 1223 from the birth of Mahommed. Written by Synd Hoossain.

(Signed)



The annexed is a fac-simile of his signet.



Among many curious matters, which the occupation of the Sultaun's palace brought to light, probably his library produced the most singular disclosures. The volumes were kept in chests, each having a separate wrapper; so that they were, in general, in excellent preservation. Some were very richly adorned, and beautifully illuminated in the manner of the Roman missals. In the archives there, the whole of the French correspondence was discovered,‡ with many secret and confidential communica-

* *Caufer*, an infidel.

† “The means I have taken,” he says, “to keep in remembrance the misfortunes I experienced six years ago from the malice of my enemies, are to discontinue sleeping in a cotton bed, and to make use of a cloth one: when I am victorious, I shall resume the bed of cotton.”

‡ Tippoo had received a letter from the Grand Seignior, and transmitted his reply to it, through the Governor-General. But he had also despatched a private epistle to Constantinople. Certainly the charges brought against Lord Teignmouth, in this private despatch, were numerous and heavy; and

tions from the Indian government to their *employées*, that had been intercepted by Tippoo's emissaries, and, of course, never reached the individuals to whom they were addressed. These seem, however, to have occasioned little interest; for, with one exception, the seals remained unbroken. Some manuscripts, in the Sultaun's handwriting, were found in a private depositary, and marked the anomalous character of the man. They seemed intended to register alike his thoughts and acts. In some pages his dreams, with their interpretation, were recorded; in others, were memoranda with instructions for the murder of certain prisoners; and these were copiously intermingled with pious aspirations* to the Almighty, expressed with christian-like humility, becoming rather a martyr than a murderer. One melancholy record was found in the compartment of an old spice-box,—it was in the well-known handwriting of the unfortunate General Matthews, and simply contained the exact date of his own murder!†

the Sultaun seems doubtful whether his Lordship's offendings against ladies and the learned men, or his encouragement of pork butchers, were most atrocious. The following was extracted from a private journal in his library:—"Amauni sent an ambassador to Zemaun Shah, the king of Cabul. This circumstance coming to the knowledge of the Governor-General, who resides at Calcutta, he proceeded thence on a visit to Mirza Amauni, and having leagued with the ministers of that country, caused Mirza Amauni to be poisoned, violated the chastity of his widow, and plundered his house of money and jewels, to the amount of twenty crores of rupees. Throughout the territory of Bengal, wherever there were men of learning, science, and rank, the English have forcibly taken prisoners their wives and daughters, violated their chastity, and carried them off to their own islands and country; seizing the youths of the class of Syuds, devotees, and learned men, and obliging them to eat the flesh of swine, proclaiming it by beat of tom-tom. In the country of Bengal, and in all other places where their authority prevails, they set up swine butchers, and cause them to sell the flesh of hogs publicly in the streets and markets."

* Among others, the following were found:—

"The service of thy altar is preferable to both worlds."

"Thou takest away sickness,—thou restorest health;
I am full of sin; thou art a sea of mercy."

† Matthews was perfectly aware of his fate: and an officer, then imprisoned in Seringapatam, thus narrates the horrible transaction. Finding out that it

The property and stores found in Seringapatam were immensely valuable; but the plunder, of which no estimate can be made, must have been enormous. The following general returns will assist the reader in estimating the value of the capture of that place:—

Estimate of Treasure and Property, taken at Seringapatam, by W. M. Gordon.

	Star Pagodas.
Specie	16,740,350
Jewels, gold, and silver bullion	25,000,000
Pepper, paddy, salt, &c.	1,100,000
Copper and brass pots, carpets, &c.	200,000
Elephants, camels, horses, &c.	540,000
Cloths in the Tosha Khana	2,000,000
Total amount	<u>45,580 350</u>

N.B. Military stores not included.

Abstract of Ordnance, &c. found in Seringapatam.

	Pieces.
Brass ordnance, different calibres	444
Ditto, unfinished in the foundry	7
Iron ordnance	<u>478</u>
Grand Total of ordnance	<u>929</u>

was intended to destroy him by poison, the unfortunate general refused to eat the victuals sent him by the killedar, and subsisted on food obtained from the compassion of the Sultann's slaves.

"The havildar, who had charge of the general, connived at these acts of humanity at first; but when it was found that General Matthews still protracted his melancholy existence, this officer was sent for by the killedar, who told him that the general's life, if much longer continued, must be paid for by the havildar's death. Upon this, the havildar communicated his orders, with the threat that accompanied them, to his unfortunate prisoner, who had now no alternative left, but perishing by poison or famine. The anxious love of life for several days maintained a struggle with the importunate calls of hunger. These, however, prevailed in the issue of the contest; he ate of the poisoned food; and drank, too, (whether to quench the rage of inflamed thirst, or to drown the torments of his soul in utter insensibility,) of the poisoned cup; and, within six hours after this fatal repast, he was found dead."

<i>Stores, Military Buildings, &c.</i>		lbs.
Round shot, various calibres		424,400
Loose gunpowder in magazines		520,000
Firelocks and carbines		99,000
Gun-barrels		22,000
Guns mounted on the works		287
Buildings for polishing, boring guns, &c.		2
Ditto ditto muskets		1
Arsenals for guns, carriages, &c.		2
Ditto for musketry		1
Ditto for shot, grape, and entrenching tools		1
Powder Magazines		11
Expense ditto		72
Armouries for making small-arms		12
Foundries		2

There may appear a difficulty, in selecting to which of these returns, the contents of the Zenana should belong. Oriental gallantry would place it doubtless in the treasure-department. It will be only necessary to state "the effective strength." Including a few of Hyder Ally's wives and mistresses, upwards of *six hundred and twenty ladies* were found immured within the building.

In looking calmly back, after an interval of forty years, at the operations preceding and attendant on the capture of Seringapatam, its immense political advantages apart, it had little, as a military achievement, to warrant the importance so generally attached to it. From the moment his first attempts upon the invading armies failed, the Sultaun's conduct became alway irresolute, and at times bordered on fatuity.* His movements were erroneous, his operations a succession of mistakes. He determined to

* "It had, indeed, been for some time reported, that Tippoo was become subject to fits of mental derangement, and the whole of his conduct seems to justify that opinion. He neglected, for several months past, the war department, and particularly that branch of it which related to the maintenance of those animals which are so essentially necessary; an object to which his father Hyder, throughout his reign, and himself, till very lately, had paid such unremitting attention. His bullocks and horses, his elephants and camels, were almost starved, and the people who had the care of them, in long arrears of pay; and this, too, at a time when he must have expected to be attacked."—*Asiatic Register*, 1799.

become assailant, when the British had cleared the jungle ; and to the jungle only, he should have confined his attacks. He held ground when he ought to have yielded it. In an open field, opposed to the army of Harris, at its most reduced strength,* with all the disposable troops he could command, a certain defeat must result, were he mad enough to hazard an action. A battle was what his enemy would be anxious to bring on, and what he should have done every thing to avoid. To garrison Seringapatam, retire to his hill forts, waste the country, harass outposts, intercept supplies, and maintain a desultory war, was his best, his only chance. Even when determined to hold the fortress to the last, his defence was remarkable for nothing but its obstinacy. With one exception,† no daring sortie,

* *Abstract Returns of the Army, showing its strength at various periods of the Campaign.*

	EUR.	NAT.	HORSES.
Strength of the army in the field, on marching from the Carnatic, exclusive of his Highness the Nizam's cavalry and infantry	6,334	19,702	2,618
Strength of the army before Seringapatam, after the march of Major-General Floyd to Pierapatam, exclusive of his Highness the Nizam's cavalry and infantry	4,632	14,012	890
Strength of the army on the return of Major-General Floyd, and junction of the Bombay army	8,026	23,948	2,618
Strength of the army on the return of Major-General Floyd from Caveriporam, with the detachments of Lieut.-Colonels Brown and Bead	8,704	26,851	2,351

N.B. In these returns, the Nizam's infantry, numbering 3,621 bayonets, 6,000 cavalry, and 23 engineers, are not included.

† At half-past two, on the morning of the 22d, the enemy's rocket men, having got into the rear of the ground on which the Bombay army were encamped, commenced a general discharge. The rocket throwing was a signal for assaulting ; and the attack was made with 6,000 infantry, and the auxiliary corps under Monsieur Lally. The French, who led the assault on the right, displayed considerable gallantry ; some of them perishing within the entrenchment by the bayonets of the besiegers. But the attack was every where repulsed, and Tippoo's infantry driven back, with a loss in killed and wounded, of more than six hundred men.

nor a vigorous employment of his extensive means of annoyance,* impeded the approaches of the besiegers. The carelessness of his own artificers, enabled the storming party to escalate the inner bastion from the ditch ; and when it was officially notified that the trenches were filled with men, Tippoo declined hurrying reserves to the trenches, ending his disbelief in an assault by daylight, with his proverbial observation, of " Who shall take Seringapatam ?" When the storming party had crowned the breach, and the uproar on the ramparts dispelled the delusion, forgetting the effect his presence must produce on devoted Mussulmans like his soldiers, he made little efforts either to rally those who had given way, or bring fresh troops forward to repel the assault ; but, from behind a traverse, employed himself *en tirailleur*, and merged the general in the sharp-shooter. Recollecting then the fact, that in the affair with Colonel Baily he had actually issued orders to retreat, which his French officers induced him to recall ; and considering the conduct of his last campaign, from his attack at Sedaseer to the fall of his capital, we can come to one conclusion only,—that Tippoo was utterly incompetent to direct the movements of an army in the field ; and, with extraordinary tact and industry in accumulating military means, he had no talent whatever in employing them to advantage.

Even in death, the Sultaun's conduct and intentions remain inexplicable. Every prudential motive should have pointed out an instant egress from the city, as the only chance of effecting an escape, rather than mobbing himself in a narrow gateway, as he did, to perish ignobly among a crowd of fugitives.

The campaign may be reduced to three events ;—the

* General Beatson states, that "on the 12th, not a gun was fired from the place, although when the Sultaun opened his artillery next day, shot fell thickly into the tope occupied by the engineers, and even reached the tent of General Harris. At night, the working parties were but seldom disturbed, and for entire days not a musket was discharged by Tippoo's soldiery from the entrenchment."

battles of Sedaseer and Mallavelly, and the defence of Seringapatam. In the first affair all was in the Sultaun's favour; numerical superiority, favourable ground, the detached positions in which the different brigades of the Bombay army were placed, and hence their partial surprise. All these advantages should have enabled Tippoo to have effected, at least, the destruction of Colonel Montresor's division. Yet, here he was disgracefully defeated. His stand at Mallavelly was most injudicious; for a fair field held out to him no prospect of success. Of the conduct of the siege we have spoken already. Had Tippoo fallen back to Chittledrorg, or some other of his hill forts, the monsoon might have set in, and the rainy season interrupted operations, and saved him for the time; and had Meer Ghoffar been entrusted with the command at Seringapatam, there is little doubt but the capital would have been more vigorously defended.

An occurrence at the opening of the siege has been made a subject of frequent discussion; and to an unimportant event, a most absurd consequence has been attached. We allude to Colonel Wellesley's night attack upon the Sultaun-pet. Baird, it will be recollected, on the preceding evening, "had scoured the tope in all directions:" and this there was nothing to prevent; for the whole chain of posts had been previously withdrawn by the enemy. Yet, although undisturbed, the General lost his way; and an accidental discovery of the fact, alone prevented him from marching directly into the Sultaun's lines;* a mistake that might have involved most serious consequences.

* Lieutenant Lambton, an officer on Baird's staff, "came up to him, and assured him that the troops were moving in an opposite direction to that which was intended, and were in fact marching directly towards the enemy. The guide was again appealed to, and was confident as before, although Lieutenant Lambton supported his opinion by the fact, that as the night was clear, he had convinced himself by watching the stars, that instead of proceeding in a southerly direction, which it was necessary to do, to regain head quarters,

On the night of the 5th, matters stood very differently. The whole chain of posts was strongly occupied; and the tope and aqueduct, ruined village, enclosures, and broken ground, crowned with musketeers and rocket-men. To penetrate a thick plantation, and cross a surface intersected with deep canals, in a night intensely dark, and exposed to a converged fire, was not to be effected. The 33d, consequently, retired with trifling loss; and next morning, with a similar force, and broad daylight to direct it, Wellesley achieved with comparative ease a task, that, had it been attempted a second time by night, would have proved, most probably, a more disastrous failure. In a diary of the late General Harris, he thus notices Baird's expedition:—"He missed his road coming back, although one would have thought it impossible: *no wonder night attacks so often fail.*" If the General, then, without the discharge of a carbine to distract him, and provided with an astronomer and pocket compass, contrived to go astray, what could be expected from Colonel Wellesley, who had neither the one nor the other to direct him? Had he both, however, we question that the result would have been different. Men moving quietly in the dark, may consult the stars, and "read their high decree;" but nothing disturbs planetary observation more, than a shower of musketry accompanied by a flight of rockets.

As to another statement, that to Baird's "magnanimity" Wellesley owed the command of the troops, on the morning when Sulstaun-pet was carried, we utterly disbelieve it. In the diary of the Commander-in-Chief, and the official letters of Colonel Wellesley, all the circumstances connected with the two attacks are frequently mentioned, but not an allusion is made to an occurrence, that could not have possibly been passed over. But on other grounds beside, we refuse the story credence. The whole transaction

they were travelling due north. In this dilemma, General Baird took a compass from his pocket, and putting a fire-fly upon the glass, ascertained beyond a doubt that Lieutenant Lambton was right."—*Hook's Life of Baird.*

bears an unmilitary and an improbable appearance.* It would have been little self-denial in Baird, to refuse, out of turn of duty, to be thrust into a command already given to another; it would have been still a smaller proof of the ardent gratitude, which General Harris professed for his own appointment to Lord Mornington,† to have offered, in return, an indignity to the brother of his benefactor; and it would have been a grosser impropriety still, in a commander-in-chief and a general of brigade, to have held a

* "The troops having waited more than an hour under arms for their leader, General Harris became impatient, and ordered General Baird himself to take the command of them. He instantly mounted his horse, and called his aide-de-camp; but a moment afterwards, a generous feeling towards Colonel Wellesley, (although he seemed destined to be his rival throughout the campaign,) induced him to pause; and going back to General Harris, he said, 'Don't you think, Sir, it would be but fair to give Wellesley an opportunity of retrieving the misfortune of last night?' General Harris listened to the kind and considerate proposal, and shortly afterwards Colonel Wellesley appeared, took the command of the party, and, at its head, succeeded in getting possession of the tope."—*Hook's Life of Baird*.

† "I shall not attempt an elaborate letter of thanks for the noble and liberal confidence and encouragement contained in yours; but I trust to that Providence on whom I depend, that your Lordship shall be paid by a thorough conviction that every thing, to the best of my abilities, shall be tried to ensure that success which your Lordship's exertions give so fair a prospect of.

* * * * *

"Your Lordship's last communications have been particularly grateful to me; and as you have taken care to secure me by every tie dear to man,—by gratitude, by my own honour and conscience being pledged, and even by the Eastern policy of having my wife and children in your hands, I think you will not be deceived;—that you may not, is my earnest prayer!"

At a subsequent period he thus writes:—

"My dear Lord, you are far exceeding my humble wishes, and I really think those of Mrs. Harris—or rather you would do so, if you preferred the request to his Majesty—to grant to me the dignity of a Baron of Great Britain."

The candour and simplicity in the conclusion of the General's letter, when he expresses the difficulty the selection of a title would occasion him, well became the successful but unassuming soldier:—

"An humble clergyman's son, thrown very early in life into the army, entirely a soldier of fortune, with scarcely any assistance save his own exertions, is little likely to have any hereditary place he would choose to commemorate; and in my instance, the *fifth* regiment was near six and twenty years my constant home."—*Wellesley Despatches*.

conversation of the kind, "on parade, and in the face of the army." Were Colonel Wellesley's quarters unknown; and could neither aide-de-camp nor orderly have been despatched to apprise him that the troops were in readiness? The whole tale bears the imprint of absurdity; and can only be referred to the many fabrications inflicted upon literary gentlemen, who have great faith in all they hear, and little acquaintance with military men and military usages.

The failure of the attack on Sultaun-pet lay in the design, and not the execution. A night assault was, for every reason, injudicious. Darkness equalizes men, and in a *mêlée*, discipline has little advantage—for there all depends on physical strength and personal determination. Success therefore hangs on a hundred accidents; and, with his knowledge of the ground, the peon, with his pike and matchlock, was just as formidable as the best trained European soldier.

The failure on Sultaun-pet, however, had one useful result; for it decided—if any doubt existed—the time on which the assault upon the city should be made. Had Seringapatam been assailed at night, it would, in all human probability, have turned out a sanguinary failure,—for Bhurtpoor proved afterwards, how desperately an Indian fortress may be defended.

Let it not be supposed, that we undervalue the conquest of the capital of Mysore. Politically viewed, its consequences were of paramount importance. No better testimony can be adduced than that of Lord Mornington, who, in a communication to the Indian Government, thus expressed his opinions:—"The fall of Seringapatam, under all the circumstances which accompanied that event, has placed the whole of the kingdom of Mysore, with all its resources, at the disposal of your Government; and the only power in India to which the French could look for assistance, or which could be deemed formidable to your interests, is now deprived of all vigour, if not entirely extinct." It was also a glorious triumph of British

gallantry; and Baird ably conducted an attack, in which he was most bravely supported. But let it be recollected, that there were twenty-two thousand Mussulman soldiers, "either within the fort or the dependent entrenchments," and that the assailants only reckoned four thousand five hundred bayonets. Had, therefore, the Sultaun been advised by Meer Ghoffar and his French engineers, and showed himself less a fatalist, and more a soldier, removed his scaffolding, and retrenched the breach, the assault on the 4th could never have succeeded, and the reduction of Seringapatam would have cost more blood, than Badajos, Rodrigo, or San Sebastian.



CHAPTER V.

COLONEL WELLESLEY'S PROCEEDINGS AS COMMANDANT OF SERINGAPATAM—GENERAL ORDER TO THE ARMY—TOKEN OF ITS RESPECT OFFERED TO LORD MORNINGTON, AND DECLINED, BUT AFTERWARDS ACCEPTED—SUCCESSION TO THE MUSNUD OF MYSORE DETERMINED—INAUGURATION OF THE RAJAH CONCILIATORY POLICY OF COLONEL WELLESLEY—DHOONDIAH WAUGH'S INSURRECTION—DEFEATED, AND DRIVEN INTO THE MAHRATTA COUNTRY—FINANCIAL DOCUMENT—OUTBREAK AT SERINGAPATAM SUPPRESSED—REAPPEARANCE OF DHOONDIAH WAUGH—HIS DESIGN UPON COLONEL WELLESLEY—LETTER TO MAJOR MUNRO.

It was particularly desirable, that the successful issue of the siege of the capital of Mysore, should be followed up by the pacification of the country. By temperate measures this object was most likely to be achieved ; and when Colonel Wellesley was appointed to the command of Seringapatam, he used every means to conciliate the adherents of the late Sultaun, and restore the general confidence of the Mussulman population. The surrender of Tippoo's eldest son, Futteh Hyder, of Purneah, his dewan or minister, and Meer Cummin ud Deen, assisted much in bringing round a general submission of the other sirdars. Circular letters were addressed to the commanders of the Sultaun's hill forts, requiring their being surrendered up ; which demand was in every instance obeyed. The army was promptly disbanded,—the silledar horse retiring to their respective homes, and the French mercenaries of

Lally and Chapuy being sent into the Carnatic, prisoners of war.*

From Fort St. George, on the 15th of May, Lord Mornington addressed the following General Order to the army:—

“The Right Hon. the Governor-General in Council, having this day received from the Commander-in-Chief of the allied army in the field, the official details of the glorious and decisive victory obtained at Seringapatam on the 4th of May, offers his cordial thanks and sincere congratulations to the Commander-in-Chief, and to all the officers and men composing the gallant army, which achieved the capture of the capital of Mysore on that memorable day. His Lordship views with admiration the consummate judgment with which the assault was planned, the unequalled rapidity, animation, and skill, with which it was executed, and the humanity which distinguished its final success. Under the favour of Providence, and the justice of our cause, the established character of the army had inspired an early confidence that the war in which we were engaged would be brought to a speedy, prosperous, and honourable issue. But the events of the 4th of May, while they have surpassed even the sanguine expectations of the Governor-General in Council, have raised the reputation of the British arms in India, to a degree of splendour and glory, unrivalled

* Abstract statement of the force sent from Mauritius, to be employed in the service of the Sultaun:—

Chapuy, General of the Land Forces	1
Du Bois, General of the Marine	1
Desmoulins, Commandant of the Europeans	1
Officers of artillery	2
Marine officers	6
Ship-builders and others	4
Officers, captains, serjeants, and linguist	26
European soldiers	36
Soldiers of the second description, or half-caste	22
<hr/>	

Total of the persons arrived from Mauritius 99
exclusive of Monsieur De Bay, the watch-maker.

in the military history of this quarter of the globe, and seldom approached in any part of the world. The lustre of this victory can be equalled only by the substantial advantages which it promises to establish, by restoring the peace and safety of the British possessions in India on a durable foundation of genuine security. The Governor-General in Council reflects with pride, satisfaction, and gratitude, that, in this arduous crisis, the spirit and exertion of our Indian army have kept pace with those of our countrymen at home; and that in India, as in Europe, Great Britain has found, in the malevolent designs of her enemies, an increasing source of her own prosperity, fame, and power.

“By order of the Right Hon. the Governor-General in Council,

“J. WEBBE,

“*Secretary to Government.*”

That the successful issue of the campaign in the Mysore might in a great degree be ascribed to the ability with which Lord Mornington originated the plan, and the zeal with which he afterwards carried it into effect, has been always admitted. The army, with that feeling, determining to mark their high estimation of his talents, selected a valuable portion of the late Sultaun's jewels, and entrusted them to General Harris, to present, in their name, to the Governor-General. The following communication was accordingly addressed to his Lordship:—

“*Madras, November 12, 1799.*

“MY LORD,

“The army, which, by your Lordship's directions, proceeded to the capital of the late Tippoo Sultaun, and achieved the conquest of Mysore, resolved, upon the plains of Seringapatam, to request your Lordship's acceptance of a star and badge of the order of St. Patrick, made from the jewels of the Sultaun, as a mark of their high respect.

“ In the name, and by the desire of that army, I have now the honour to present your Lordship with the star and badge.”

A point of delicacy, however, induced Lord Mornington to decline this valuable token of military regard; and, in his reply to General Harris, he thus details his reasons:—

“SIR,

“ Fort William, January 7, 1800. ”

“ Any mark of the respect of that gallant army, which achieved the conquest of Mysore, must ever be esteemed by me as a distinguished honour. The resolution now communicated to me by your Excellency, having been adopted by the army in the hour of victory, and on the field of conquest, affords a most satisfactory testimony of their intention to associate my name with the memory of their unexampled triumph.

“ Under this impression, the sentiments of public zeal, and the just sense of honourable ambition, concur to render me sincerely desirous of accepting the gift of the army, and wearing it as an emblem of their glory, and of their good-will towards me. I am satisfied that it never was in the contemplation of the legislature of Great Britain, to prohibit the acceptance of such honorary marks of distinction; but an attentive examination of the laws relating to the government of the British possessions in India will convince your Excellency, that I could not accept the gift, which you present to me in the name of the army, without violating the letter of existing statutes, and without creating a precedent, which might hereafter become the source of injury to the public service.

“ I must therefore request your Excellency, in assuring the army of my high estimation of the honour which they design to confer upon me, to signify that my acceptance of it is precluded by the positive letter of the law.”

It is only necessary to remark, that, subsequently, the difficulty was removed. The jewels were handed over to the Honourable Court of Directors for the Military Department of Indian Affairs; and from them a special permission was obtained, to enable Lord Mornington to accept this honourable testimonial. The order was dated 10th June, 1801; and nothing could be more complimentary than the terms in which this deviation from a general regulation was recorded:—

“ We are thoroughly sensible of the propriety and delicacy of the motive, which induced our Governor-General to decline the acceptance of this token of respect to his Lordship from the gallant conquerors of Mysore. We hereby present the star and badge of the order of St. Patrick, formed from the jewels taken at Seringapatam, to his Lordship's acceptance, the same having been tendered to, and received by the Court of Directors for that purpose.”

A regular garrison having been established in Seringapatam, a commission was issued by the Governor-General, to partition the conquered territories among the allies, according to preliminary treaties. The commissioners nominated by Lord Mornington, were Lieutenant-General Harris, Lieutenant-Colonel Barry Clase, the Hon. Colonel Wellesley, the Hon. Henry Wellesley, and Lieutenant-Colonel Kirkpatrick, with Captains Malcolm and Munro, as secretaries.

In adjusting this important affair, the interests of the allies were faithfully consulted, and but one difficulty arose to Lord Mornington, and that regarded the succession to the throne. It was for him to decide to which claimant the musnud should be given; and thus choose between the descendant of the Hindu princes, and the grandson of the Mohammedan usurper. When neither aspirant could assert an absolute right, and the decision of the Governor-General was conclusive, it required that much caution

should be used in adjudicating claims on which a throne depended. Serious results were involved in this important question; and not only the tranquillity of the Mysore, but the future peace of India, rested on the sound exercise of Lord Mornington's discretionary powers. That the restoration of the Rajah's family would deserve, if not secure, a deep return of gratitude, might be reasonably anticipated; while, from the grandchildren of Hyder Ally, nothing could be expected but the same rancorous and enduring hatred, which marked, from the cradle to the grave, the career of their guilty parent.* The choice of the Governor-General was prudently made; and Kistna Rajah Oodiaver was placed upon the musnud. The appointment would of course delight the greater portion of the population of Mysore, they being Hindus; while the Sirdars and chief officers of the deceased Sultaun, were easily reconciled to a change in the dynasty of the kingdom,—some having been already pensioned by the Indian Government, and more restored by Colonel Wellesley to the trusts and places they had formerly held, before the succession of Tippoo's family was extinguished. No policy indeed, could have been wiser than that pursued by the governor of Seringapatam. By the means adopted, he secured the services of Tippoo Sultaun's intelligent and experienced functionaries; while their fidelity was sufficiently guaranteed by a knowledge, that retention of office entirely depended upon the correctness, with which their respective duties were discharged.

To the Commissioners, the decision of the Governor-General as to the succession to the throne was officially

* The following anecdote will prove how deeply the Sultaun's children had imbibed his well-known antipathy to the English:—"After the capture of the palace, while Colonel Kirkpatrick, and some other of the *employées*, were examining Tippoo's library, in search of certain state-documents which it was supposed to contain, the two youngest of the princes entered the apartment. Unconscious that he was overheard, the younger boy observed, in a low voice, but with great bitterness of expression, to his companion,—'*See how these infidel hogs are tossing our futher's books about!*'"

communicated, and orders given that the necessary steps should be taken, for a formal restoration of the youthful Rajah. The duty devolved upon Colonel Wellesley ; and after he had despatched the families of Hyder Ally and Tippoo Sultaun to Vellore, he visited the humble dwelling, where for many years the royal family had resided.

That these unfortunate descendants of a dethroned prince, should experience harsh treatment from the son of the usurper, might have been expected ; but the extreme of want and misery, to which Tippoo's inhumanity had reduced them, was almost incredible. They had not only been subjected to privations, but to what, in Eastern estimation, would be considered the deepest degradation—the separate accommodation which Oriental usage requires for the opposite sexes, had been savagely disregarded. In one apartment, the whole of the Rajah's descendants were found by Colonel Wellesley ; a portion of the chamber having been screened off by a curtain, to afford the Queen-Mother and other female branches, the semblance of that privacy, which in earlier and more prosperous days they had so rigidly exacted. When acquainted by Purneah, the dewan of the late Sultaun, of the decision of the Indian government, they could hardly be persuaded, that the happy alteration in their fortunes was anything but a dream. As the Rajah was but five years old, the Rana, or Queen-Mother, expressed her gratitude to his English benefactors, promising on his part the most devoted loyalty and gratitude, and that, in her Eastern parlance, “while sun and moon should continue.”

It had been arranged by the Indian government, that the permanent residence of the young Rajah should be removed from Seringapatam, and established in the ancient city of Mysore ; and thither, and with fitting honours, himself and his family were conducted. The religious peculiarities of the Hindus were duly regarded in preparing for the ceremonial—and the task was entrusted to the Brahmin priests, of selecting a fortunate day

for the inauguration of their prince. Colonel Wellesley, with General Harris, and Meer Allum Bahauder, were present, and officially assisted. Additional troops had been ordered to Mysore, to give effect to the act of restoration; and under a triple volley of musketry from the guard of honour, and a royal salute from the batteries of Seringapatam, the signet of authority was placed in the boy's hand, and he was then conducted to the musnud by the General and Meer Allum, and, in due form, proclaimed Rajah of Mysore.

With the inauguration of the young Rajah, the labours of the Commission terminated, and it was immediately dissolved. To Colonel Wellesley the command of the Mysore was confided, and his appointment was officially announced on the 11th of September, 1799.*

At Seringapatam, head quarters were established. Though the light and airy palace of the Dowlat Baug was used by Colonel Wellesley for an occasional residence, every thing was done to gratify the feelings and conciliate the prejudices of the vanquished. The mosque, where the remains of Hyder Ally and Tippoo Sultaun were deposited, was rigidly respected,—kinkauks from the tomb of Mecca ornamented the Mausoleum,†—fresh flowers were daily strewn upon the floor,—and an English guard protected the devotees who visited the last resting-place of the Sultauns of Mysore, a place, sanctified in their sight by all those holy associations, which the true followers of the prophet are taught to venerate.

Within the Dowlat Palace, one hall was painted with different scenes, imagined from the defeat of Colonel Baily. Although these subjects could be anything but gratifying to the feelings of Colonel Wellesley, painfully

* "G. O.

"*Head Quarters.*

"The Commander-in-Chief being about to proceed to the Presidency, in obedience to the orders of the Governor-General in Council, appoints Colonel the Hon. A. Wellesley to command the troops serving above the Ghauts."

† Welsh.

recalling as they did, the slaughter of the bravest band that ever perished beneath the overwhelming masses of a tyrant—still, they were not only respected by the British Governor, but one, which had been accidentally damaged, was restored at his private expense.

No wonder, then, that Colonel Wellesley's fortunate appointment to the command of the Mysore, and the conciliatory measures he adopted, accomplished the happiest results; while, "his active superintendence, discernment, impartiality, and decision, in the arduous and important duties of the civil, as well as the military administration of the command, were such as to have fully warranted his brother's judicious selection, and deserved and obtained the gratitude of the conquered people."*

The country above the Ghauts† was tranquil; all apprehension from French efforts to disturb it had subsided; and Colonel Wellesley had ample leisure to turn his attention, chiefly to the civil administration of the extensive province over which he had been placed. But the insecurity of Eastern quiet has ever been proverbial; and it was to be instanced again, by a sudden appearance of danger, and that from a quarter, whence none could have been reasonably anticipated.

On the capture of Seringapatam, several prisoners were found in the dungeons of Tippoo Sultaun—a brother of his own among the number—and they were at once liberated, without any inquiry being made into the causes of their incarceration. One of the captives, thus delivered from a hopeless bondage,—for such dependant on a tyrant's caprice has commonly proved,—was a Mahratta trooper, called Dhoondiah Waugh. He was a nameless man—one who had entered the service of Hyder—deserted at his death—became a freebooter—committed sundry depredations in the Mysore—was fool enough to listen to the false promises of Tippoo,—returned, was employed,

* Wellington Despatches.

† *Ghauts*—a pass in the mountains.

suspected, imprisoned, made a Mussulman, and then left to perish in irons and a dungeon, by the greater ruffian of the twain. At the capture of the fortress, his fetters were stricken off; and Dhoondiah lost no time, in leaving the capital of the Mysore, "many a coss* behind him."

In a disbanded army there were many spirits like himself; and Dhoondiah Waugh, found no difficulty in recruiting a numerous band. He had already gained a robber-reputation,—generally a first step, in eastern history, to the foundation of a throne. Dhoondiah was a bold and dangerous adventurer—cruel, sordid, crafty, with great personal courage, and some little military skill. In a very short time, the number of his banditti had increased to an extent, that rendered this daring marauder more to be dreaded than despised.†

The first of Dhoondiah's exploits, after his liberation from confinement, was an incursion into the country of Bednore, where he exacted heavy contributions from the natives, accompanying his robberies by the most savage acts of barbarity. Hourly his banditti increased in number—dispersed bands of Tippoo's troops, who were wandering loosely over the peninsula, flocked readily to the standard of the freebooter—for, with the military retainer of an Indian chief, the transition from soldier to robber, was little but a change of name. It was deemed advisable, therefore, to arrest Dhoondiah's career at once—for some of the killedars had already betrayed their trusts, and many hill forts and towns had fallen into his hands. To Colonels Dalrymple and Stevenson the task of crushing the freebooter was confided; and, with two light brigades, they marched from Chittledroog on the 21st of July.

The opening of the expedition was successful: a part of the banditti, amounting to 250 horse with 400 infantry,

* A coss is an irregular measure, generally about two English miles.

† In letters of Colonel Wellesley, addressed to Lord Mornington and others, frequent allusions are made to this brigand; and from his audacity and influence, it would appear that serious consequences were apprehended.

were overtaken, cut to pieces, and dispersed. Dhoondiah himself crossed the Toombuddra and retreated, followed by his pursuers as rapidly as they could push forward. Stevenson passed the river on the 31st, and carried the fort of Simoga by assault on the 8th of August; while Dalrymple operated on the western bank, and on the same day stormed Hernelly, in which place the freebooter had left a garrison.

The detachments having united, a combined attack was made upon Dhoondiah's camp, which had been pitched in a very strong position, defended by the guns of Shirka-poor. Dalrymple drove the freebooter's cavalry into the river, while the infantry carried the fort by assault. The enemy suffered a heavy loss; and had not difficult roads, and a wooded country, delayed the march of the corps under Stevenson, the whole of the banditti must have been cut to pieces. This unfortunate delay, however, enabled Dhoondiah to effect his escape by a boat that was kept in readiness for his use, in the event of his being defeated.

Not daring to make another stand, the marauder crossed the Marhatta frontier; and his pursuers, respecting the treaty with the Peshwah, forbore to follow him. But Goklah, an officer of the Peshwah, with a Marhatta corps, attacked Dhoondiah in his new position, dispersed his followers and plundered the camp. Deprived of guns, elephants, and bullocks, the "King of the Two Worlds,"* with a handful of his banditti, saved themselves by a precipitous flight.

The defeat of this brigand left the Mysore for a time at rest; and during the earlier part of the succeeding year (1800) Colonel Wellesley was occupied with the civil details of his command. He assisted in carrying into effect, a proposed survey of the territories recently ceded to the Company and the Rajah, and also in permanently

* Dhoondiah afterwards assumed this modest designation.

settling the annuities, granted to those persons who had been pensioned after the fall of Seringapatam.

Probably among the most distinguishing traits of the Duke of Wellington's character, the facility with which, through life, he directed his mental energies to efforts of the most opposite description, will be found the most remarkable. The hand that wields the sword, can seldom use the pen with much success. The best soldiers have proved but sorry scribes; and actions, brilliantly achieved, have been but badly detailed by those who have performed them. That Colonel Wellesley, in his military correspondence, was perspicuous and intelligible, his own despatches prove; but that a young and ardent soldier, could turn his attention to monetary arrangements, and those too, of a complicated character, which to a European must have been very embarrassing, is still more wonderful. That Colonel Wellesley did so, and with success, the following remarks upon the financial system pursued by the native traders in Seringapatam, will clearly establish.

The extract is taken from a letter, addressed to Lieut.-Colonel Close, and dated the 28th December, 1799.

"I have written to Campbell a long letter about the nerrick of exchange, in which I have endeavoured to explain the principles of the whole system of shroffing, against the evils of which his regulations are to guard. From what I am going to mention to you, however, I am afraid that if the nerrick at Bangalore is permanently fixed, I must loosen my system here, and must allow the exchange to fluctuate.

"In all the conversations which you and I have had upon this intricate subject, we have agreed that the shroff derived a profit only by fluctuations. It is therefore clear, that in Seringapatam there is no, or but little profit, and that there would be no shroffs here if they did not find one elsewhere; or that they would combine to force me to allow the exchange to fluctuate. I have lately made inquiries upon the subject, and I find that

the great shroffs here have houses at Bangalore, at Sera, and at the principal places on the Malabar coasts, and they make their profit, by the fluctuation at those places.

“Serengapatam is a place of great security, where there is much trade, and of course a large exchange of money. In order to have this security, the shroffs forego the advantages which they would derive upon the fluctuation at places at no greater distance, where the exchange is not fixed. But fix that exchange, and there is an end of their means of livelihood; and of course, they must either abandon the trade entirely, or force me to allow a fluctuation in the place where they carry it on.

“I doubt whether the destruction of our fixed nerrick at Serengapatam will not be an inconvenience to the country, as well as to us; and therefore nothing ought to be done which can endanger it.”*

A popular outbreak at Serengapatam created some temporary confusion; and though apparently confined to the lower classes, it was suspected that those of a superior caste had fomented the disturbance. Colonel Wellesley describes the occurrence to Lieutenant-Colonel Close; and his letter indicates with what promptness he suppressed the business at its outset:—

“Last night, and early this morning, parties of pariah people and cook-boys went about the streets, armed with clubs, and threatened the bazaar people, in case they should open their shops; of these, four were caught in the fort, and in the fact. This morning a large body assembled at the Cárýghaut, and another at the Chendgall ford, who plundered the country people coming with their goods, broke the chatties of those bringing milk, and stopped all communication with the country by the lower fords. The bazaars in the fort and Ganjam were shut. Under these circumstances it became necessary to take

* Wellington Despatches.

some serious and decided steps towards restoring peace and confidence. I ordered a small party of Europeans out from the garrison, to cross at the Chendgall ford; a small party of sepoys from camp to the Caryghaut hill, as the largest mob had put themselves at the choultries, at the bottom of it; and a party of cavalry into the Lochary, to assist in case they should make off unhurt, before the infantry should reach them. Notwithstanding repeated messages, and that the cavalry was within 100 yards of them, for near an hour, they remained till the infantry got on both sides of them, within pistol-shot. The infantry fired; two of them, and the two head men whom I had sent out, were killed, and two wounded. The whole dispersed, and the communication is going on, and all is as quiet as if nothing had happened.

“A native general court-martial is now sitting to try the fellows who were taken in the fort; and I intend to hang two of them, if they should be sentenced, as I imagine they will. The people concerned were mostly gentlemen’s servants, horse-keepers, and soldiers’ cooks; I dare say set on by the higher classes in the service of the officers. It is fortunate that the attempt has been made whilst I have been here; and I dare say it will not be renewed during my absence, or ever again.”*

Four of the rioters were condemned; but circumstances inclined Colonel Wellesley to extend mercy to the offenders, and they escaped the halter at the expense of a sound flogging.

The tranquillity of a country recently acquired by conquest, is exposed to frequent interruptions. Dhoondiah Waugh was “scotched, not killed;” and, untamed by recent discomfiture, the restless freebooter again was in the saddle, and had succeeded in collecting to his robber-standard a banditti, whose numbers threatened to seriously disturb that part of the Indian territory which lay within the reach of predatory incursion.

• Wellington Despatches.

The opening design of Dhoondiah Waugh, exhibits in a striking light the daring of the brigand's character. A letter from Colonel Wellesley to Lieutenant-Colonel Close, thus details the circumstance. The despatch is dated 3d February, 1800.

"A fellow came here this day, and informed me that he had come from the Marhatta country, as far as Toomkoor, with a gang employed by Dhoondiah, to carry me off when I should go out hunting. He says that Dhoondiah proposes to collect a large force in this neighbourhood, and to join them himself. In order to prove to him how little I fear his gang, I go out hunting to-morrow."*

On the following morning the informer presented himself again, "and repeated his story, with assurances of its truth." The Colonel however persevered. He went out to hunt, as usual; and his Aide-de-Camp, Captain West, believed that he saw "some twenty people on horseback." The report of Dhoondiah's intentions was also current at Mysore; and there is little doubt, that a daring freebooter like him, had *hardiesse* enough to attempt, what might have been very easily effected.

Though Colonel Wellesley personally disregarded Dhoondiah's designs, still he took measures to suppress these predatory demonstrations. A letter to Major Munro shows that he acted with his customary decision—and by some severe, but necessary examples, he checked the career of the robbers in Bednore.

"March 2, 1800.

"Since Colonel Close's return to Seringapatam, I have had some conversation with him respecting the thieves in Soonda. It has appeared to him and to me, that the only mode by which you can expect to get rid of them, is to hunt them out. In the province of Bednore we employed some of the Rajah's cavalry; with the support of our infantry, some of the thieves were caught, some

* Wellington Despatches.

of them were hanged, and some severely punished in different ways. The consequence has been, that lately that country has not been visited by them; and most probably, a similar operation in Soonda would have a similar effect. I have spoken to Purneah on the subject, and I find that he can assist with about two hundred and fifty or three hundred horsemen, without inconvenience. These, divided into two or three parties, supported by our infantry, would give a proper shekar; and I strongly advise you not to let the Marhatta boundary stop you in the pursuit of your game, when you shall once have started it. Two or three fair hunts, and cutting up about half a dozen, will most probably induce the thieves to prefer some other country to Soonda, as the scene of their operations."*

* Wellington Despatches.



CHAPTER VI.

BATAVIAN EXPEDITION—COMMAND OFFERED TO COLONEL WELLESLEY—COMMUNICATIONS WITH LORD CLIVE—THREATENED DISTURBANCES IN THE MYSORE—COLONEL WELLESLEY DECLINES LEAVING HIS COMMAND—DHOONDIAH DEFEATS GOCKLAH—COLONEL WELLESLEY MARCHES AGAINST HIM—SURPRISES HIS CAMP—FARTHER OPERATIONS—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF DHOONDIAH—COLONEL WELLESLEY ORDERED TO TRINCOMALEE—DELAY THERE—LEAVES CEYLON—CORRESPONDENCE—APPOINTED SECOND IN COMMAND UNDER BAIRD—SEIZED WITH FEVER—OBLIGED TO RESIGN HIS APPOINTMENT—RESTORED TO HIS COMMAND IN THE MYSORE.

IN the May of 1800, Colonel Wellesley received a letter from the Governor-General offering to unite him with Admiral Rainier, in the command of an expedition destined against the island of Batavia. The reasons which induced Lord Mornington to offer, and Colonel Wellesley to decline the command, were alike honourable to both. The Governor-General thus expresses himself:—

“The King has given me the power of selecting the persons who are to conduct this expedition; and I have thought it, on every ground, most expedient to place the principal conduct of the equipment and negotiation in the hands of Admiral Rainier. It will be necessary to join a military officer in the commission with him; and a conscientious sense of duty induces me to think, that you are the most fit person to be selected for that service, provided you can safely be spared from Mysore for the period of the expedition, which I imagine may be four or five months, but probably cannot be longer.

"In proposing this service to you, justice requires that I should state to you its contingent advantages. I have every reason to believe that the warehouses at Batavia contain public property to a very large amount. This will necessarily fall to the crown; and in the instructions for the expedition to Surinam, the whole property of the same description was reserved expressly for his Majesty's pleasure, no part of it being granted to the captors by the tenor of those instructions. The instructions, however, are so expressed, as to admit little doubt that the King's intention was ultimately to grant a proportion, at least, to the captors, of the public property at Surinam. My instructions, with relation to this point, will be precisely the same as those given in England with respect to Surinam; and I therefore conclude, that the expedition will be very advantageous to the naval and military commanders."

Lord Mornington further continues:—

"Having thus stated the whole of this case to you, without reserve, I desire you to make your option, upon your own view of the question; with this single reservation, that I am persuaded you will be aware of the necessity of postponing any decision upon it, until you have ascertained that Lord Clive can substitute in your present command, during your absence, a person completely satisfactory to him in every respect. For this purpose I request you to write privately to Lord Clive, and to act according to his wishes."*

Colonel Wellesley accordingly, communicated to Lord Clive, the offer of the Batavian command which had been made him by his brother. His Lordship, who had generally disapproved of the projected expedition, conveyed to the Governor-General an ardent entreaty, that the Colonel should decline the contemplated appointment, and continue in his command of the Mysore. The Marquis thus communicated the request to his brother:—

* Wellesley Despatches.

"Fort William, June 6, 1800.

"MY DEAR ARTHUR,

"Lord Clive has pressed for your continuance in Mysore with an earnestness so honourable to you, that I think you cannot accept of the command of the forces destined for Batavia; indeed, I suspect that you could not quit Mysore at present. Your conduct there has secured your character and advancement, for the remainder of your life; and you may trust me for making the best use of your merits in your future promotion."

That the Batavian expedition was a service much to be desired by Colonel Wellesley, may be readily imagined. The plan had emanated from the King himself; and the capture of a very valuable colony, would necessarily render a command as profitable as it was honourable. But in the aspect of political affairs there was much to cause alarm; for the increasing strength of Dhoondiah Waugh, and growing disaffection of the Polygars,* became every day more notorious. These circumstances at once decided Colonel Wellesley in his choice. The contest lay between interest and duty; and, with a high-minded soldier, the election was easily made. This determination had been already communicated to the Marquis Wellesley, in a letter, of which the following is an extract:—

"Dhoondiah is certainly a despicable enemy; but, from circumstances, he is one against whom we have been obliged to make a formidable preparation. It is absolutely neces-

* "I think that, upon the whole, we are not in the most thriving condition in this country. Polygars, Nairs, and Moplas, in arms on all sides of us; an army full of disaffection and discontent, amounting to Lord knows what, on the frontier, which increases as it advances, like a snow-ball in snow. To oppose this, we have nothing that ought to be taken from the necessary garrisons, and the corps we have in them are incomplete in men, and without officers. If we go to war in earnest, however (and if we take the field at all, it ought to be in earnest), I will collect every thing that can be brought together from all sides, and we ought not to quit the field so long as there is a discontented or unsubdued Polygar in the country."—*Colonel Wellesley to Major Munro, 7th May, 1800.*

sary to the peace of this country of Canara and Malabar, that that man should be given up to us; and I doubt not that before now you will have made a demand for him upon the government of Poonah. If we do not get him, we must expect a general insurrection of all the discontented and disaffected of these countries. I have information that letters have been received by most of them, either from him, or from others written in his name, calling upon them to take the opportunity to rebel against the Company's government, or that of their allies; and his invasion of our territory is looked to as a circumstance favourable to their views. The destruction of this man, therefore, is absolutely necessary for our tranquillity; and nothing will be more easy, if the Marhattas are really disposed to enter into the plan. If they are not, it will be a matter of difficulty; and it may become a question, whether the whole power of the Company ought not to be turned to this object. I was aware that this was the case before the troops were collected; and although I was certain that it was the only mode of saving this country from being plundered, I did not like to put it into execution without Lord Clive's orders. It was clear that when an army should be collected to oppose a man who had an asylum in the Marhatta country, and who may therefore be reckoned a part of the Marhatta state, the Government would be committed with that of the Marhattas, and our honour would require that we should go through with the business, until that man should be given up to us, or that we should have some adequate security for his good behaviour.

"If, then, the Government of Poonah is inclined to give this man up to us, or to co-operate with us in his destruction, it may be possible for me to go to Batavia; if they should not, matters here will take a very serious turn, and no prospect of advantage, or of credit to be gained, shall induce me to quit this country."

The audacity of the restless brigand became daily more intolerable, and Colonel Wellesley decided on marching

against Dhoondiah with all the disposable force he could collect in the Mysore. It was full time, indeed, to arrest this freebooter's career. He had already defeated his old antagonist, Gocklah; and an immediate movement was required to save the remains of the beaten corps. On the 19th of July, having been joined by Gocklah's cavalry, Colonel Wellesley lost no time in adopting active measures to crush the marauder.* The annexed letter contains the Colonel's detail of his operations.

*"Camp, right of the Malpoorba, opposite Manouty,
31st July, 1800.*

"MY DEAR COLONEL,

"I have the pleasure to inform you that I have struck a blow against Dhoondiah, which he will feel severely.

"After the fall of Dummul and Gudduck, I heard that Dhoondiah was encamped near Soondootty, west of the Pursghur hill, and that his object was to cover the passage of his baggage over the Malpoorba at Manouty. I then determined upon a plan to attack both him and his baggage at the same time, in co-operation with Bowser. His detachment, however, did not arrive at Dummul till the 25th, and was two marches in my rear; but I thought it most important that I should approach Dhoondiah's army at all events, and take advantage of any movement which he might make. I accordingly moved on, and arrived on the 29th at Allaganaddy, which is fifteen miles from Soondootty, and twenty-six from this place. I intended to halt

* Dhoond'ah's was a very simple but a very effective system of financing—
"These bringarries give a curious account of the manner in which Dhoondiah goes on. They say that he has with him still above 40,000 of their class; that he employs them, and gives them the means of living in the following manner: When he approaches a village or a town which is unprotected by a fort, he sends a body of horse and of bringarries to levy a contribution; he takes to himself all the money he can get, and gives them at a certain low price all the grain and all the cattle they can find. They pay him this price for the grain and cattle, and they are allowed to sell them at such profit as his camp will afford."—*Wellington Despatches.*

at Allaganaddy till the 31st, on which day I expected Colonel Bowser at Nurgoond; but Dhoondiah broke up, from Soondootty, as soon as he heard of my arrival at Allaganaddy, sent part of his army to Doodwar, part towards Jellahaul, and part, with the baggage, to this place.

"I then marched on the morning of the 30th, to Hoo-gurgoor, which is east of the Pursghur hill, when I learnt that Dhoondiah was here with his baggage. I determined to move on, and attack him. I surprised his camp at three o'clock in the evening, with the cavalry, and we drove into the river or destroyed every body that was in it, took an elephant, several camels, bullocks, horses innumerable, families, women and children, &c. &c. The guns were gone over, and we made an attempt to dismount them, by a fire from this side; but it was getting dark, my infantry was fatigued by the length of the march,* we lost a man or two, and I saw plainly that we should not succeed, and I therefore withdrew my guns to my camp.

"I do not know whether Dhoondiah was with this part of his army, but I rather believe he was not. Bubben Jung was in the camp, put on his armour to fight, mounted his horse, and rode him into the river, where he was drowned. Numbers met with the same fate.

"One tandah of bringarries, in this neighbourhood, has sent to me for cowle, and I have got the family of a head bringarry amongst those of several others. I have detained them, but have sent cowle to the bringarry.

"I hear that every body is deserting Dhoondiah; and I believe it, as my Marhattas are going out this night to attack one of his parties gone towards Doodwar. They were before very partial to my camp.

* "I must halt here to-morrow, to refresh a little, having marched every day since the 22d of July; and on the 30th, the day on which I took his baggage, I marched twenty-six miles—which, let me tell you, is no small affair in this country. My troops are in high health and spirits, and their pockets full of money, the produce of plunder."—*Wellington Despatches.*

"I have a plan for crossing some Europeans over the river to destroy the guns, which I am afraid I cannot bring off; and then I think I shall have done this business completely. I am not, however, quite certain of success, as the river is broad and rapid.

"Believe me, &c.

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

"Lieut.-Col. Close."

"I have just returned from the river, and have got the guns, six in number. I made the Europeans swim over to seize a boat; the fort was evacuated. We got the boat and guns, which I have given to the Marhattas."

Although unable to overtake "the King of the Two Worlds," the activity of Colonel Stevenson's pursuit distressed the marauder sadly, and occasioned him a heavy loss. The roads were covered with his baggage, and thickly strewn with the bodies of people of all ages and sexes, and numbers of dead bullocks and camels. But Dhoondiah's career was hurrying rapidly to a close; and the following letter to Major Munro, details the particular circumstances attending on the defeat and death of a personage, for whom the sovereignty of one world was not sufficient.

"Camp at Yepulpurry, September 11, 1800.

"I have the pleasure to inform you that I gained a complete victory yesterday, in an action with Dhoondiah's army, in which he was killed. His body was recognised, and was brought into camp on a gun attached to the 19th dragoons. After I had crossed the Malpoorba, it appeared to me very clear, that if I pressed upon the King of the Two Worlds, with my whole force, on the northern side of the Dooab, his Majesty would either cross the Toombuddra with the aid of the Patan chiefs, and would then enter Mysore; or he would return into Savanore, and play the



Exposition de 1875

Exposition de 1875

devil with my peaceable communications. I therefore determined, at all events, to prevent his Majesty from putting those designs into execution; and I marched with my army to Kauagherry. I sent Stevenson towards Deodroog, and along the Kistna, to prevent him from sending his guns and baggage to his ally, the Rajah of Soorapoor; and I pushed forward the whole of the Marhatta and Mogul cavalry in one body, between Stevenson's corps and mine.

"I marched from Kauagherry on the 8th, left my infantry at Nowly, and proceeded on with the cavalry only; and I arrived here on the 9th, the infantry at Chinnoor about fifteen miles in my rear.

"The King of the World broke up on the 9th, from Malgherry, about twenty-five miles on this side of Raichore, and proceeded towards the Kistna; but he saw Colonel Stevenson's camp, returned immediately, and encamped on that evening about nine miles from hence, between this place and Burmoo. I had early intelligence of his situation; but the night was so bad, and my horses so much fatigued, that I could not move. After a most anxious night I marched in the morning and met the King of the World with his army, about five thousand horse, at a village called Conahgull, about six miles from hence. He had not known of my being so near him in the night,—had thought that I was at Chinnoor, and was marching to the westward with the intention of passing between the Marhatta and Mogul cavalry and me. He drew up, however, in a very strong position, as soon as he perceived me; and the victorious army stood for some time with apparent firmness. I charged them with the 19th and 25th* dragoons, and the 1st and 2d regiments of cavalry; and drove them before me till they dispersed, and were scattered over the face of the country. I then returned and attacked the royal camp, and got possession of elephants, camels, baggage, &c. &c., which were still upon the ground. The Mogul and Marhatta cavalry came up about eleven o'clock;

* Afterwards the 22d light dragoons.

and they have been employed ever since in the pursuit and destruction of the scattered fragments of the victorious army.

“Thus has ended this warfare ; and I shall commence my march in a day or two towards my own country. An honest killadar of Chinnoor had written to the King of the World by a regular tappal, established for the purpose of giving him intelligence, that I was to be at Nowly on the 8th, and at Chinnoor on the 9th. His Majesty was misled by this information, and was nearer me than he expected. The honest killadar did all he could to detain me at Chinnoor, but I was not to be prevailed upon to stop ; and even went so far as to threaten to hang a great man sent to show me the road, who manifested an inclination to show me a good road to a different place. My own, and the Marhatta cavalry, afterwards prevented any communication between his Majesty and the killadar.

“ Believe me, &c.

“ ARTHUR WELLESLEY.”

It was fortunate for the King of the World that he exited from the stage of life so honourably. Had he been secured alive, the probability is great, from the letter of Colonel Wellesley's instructions, that Dhoondiah's royalty would not have saved him from a rope.*

A circumstance most creditable to the humanity of the victor deserves to be recorded. When the baggage of the freebooter was overtaken, a beautiful boy of four years old was found, and brought to Colonel Wellesley's tent. His name was Sulabuth Khan, and he proved to be the favourite son of Dhoondiah. Not only did Colonel Wellesley afford his present protection to the orphan ; but on leaving the East for Europe, he deposited a large sum of money with Colonel Symmonds, to defray the expenses of his future

* “ You are to pursue Dhoondiah Waugh wherever you may find him, and hang him on the first tree.”—*Secretary Welbe to Col. Wellesley, May 24, 1800.*

maintenance and education. Sulabuth grew up a handsome and intelligent youth—was placed in the service of the Rajah of Mysore, and there he continued till his death.*

Colonel Wellesley having been nominated to the command at Trincomalee, announced his appointment to General Braithwaite on the 19th December, and immediately proceeded thither. Difficulties had arisen from the first moment the expedition had been planned; and on many points, the Governor-General and Admiral Rainier seem to have misunderstood each other. There appeared a want of unity between the services; and that scheme of attempting the Dutch settlements was never ultimately carried out. After having been a month at Trincomalee, Colonel Wellesley wrote to Lord Mornington,† that “he had received no tidings of the Admiral,” and inferred that the attack upon the Mauritius would be postponed.

Finally, founding his judgment on the contents of despatches received from the Government, and “information that reached him through private channels,” he decided on removing the troops to Bombay. This step was taken entirely on his own responsibility; and it is not surprising that he felt some apprehension, lest this decisive measure might subject him to an imputation of independence of action, not exactly compatible with proper deference to the superior authority of the Governor-General.

Indeed, from the time he quitted the Mysore, the Colonel seems to have foreseen the mischief his absence was likely to occasion; and it was but natural that he should contrast the bright and fortunate period of a successful command, with an appointment embarrassed by difficulties and delays, doubtful as to whether it should be attempted, and by no means certain of ending in success. In a letter to his brother, the Hon. Henry Wellesley, after observing, “I shall consider these expeditions as the most unfortunate

* Sulabuth Khan died of cholera in 1822.

† His Lordship had been created an English Baron and Irish Marquess. The notification of this advance in honours reached India in June, 1800.

circumstances for me, in every point of view, that could have occurred," he thus continues:—

"I was at the top of the tree in this country; the governments of Fort St. George and Bombay, which I had served, placed unlimited confidence in me, and I had received from both strong and repeated marks of their approbation. Before I quitted the Mysore country, I arranged the plan for taking possession of the Cedel Districts, which was done without striking a blow; and another plan for conquering Wynaad and reconquering Malabar, which I am informed has succeeded without loss on our side. But this supercession has ruined all my prospects, founded upon any service that I may have rendered."

* * * * *

"I have not been guilty of robbery or murder, and he (the Governor-General) has certainly changed his mind; but the world, which is always good-natured towards those whose affairs do not exactly prosper, will not, or rather does not, fail to suspect that both, or worse, have been the occasion of my being banished, like General Kray, to my estate in Hungary. I did not look, and did not wish, for the appointment which was given me; and I say that it would probably have been more proper to give it to somebody else; but when it was given to me,* and a circular written to the Government upon the subject, it would have been fair to allow me to hold it till I did something to deserve to lose it.

"I put private considerations out of the question, as they ought, and have had, no weight in causing either my original appointment, or my supercession. I am not quite satisfied with the manner in which I have been treated by Government upon the occasion. However, I have lost

* This allusion is occasioned by his having been first nominated to the command of the Batavian expedition, to which General Baird was afterwards appointed.

neither my health, spirits, nor temper in consequence thereof.

“But it is useless to write any more upon a subject, of which I wish to retain no remembrance whatever.”

Colonel Wellesley's explanation, however, proved satisfactorily, that he had exercised a sound discretion in quitting Trincomalee*—and as the Governor-General had abandoned the intended expedition against Batavia, and turned his entire attention to effect a powerful diversion on the coasts of the Red Sea, he pressed the Colonel to accept a command under General Baird, to whom, in right of seniority, the expedition had been very properly confided. The following extract is from a letter dated March 3d, addressed by the Marquess Wellesley to his brother:—

“General Baird will bring you several letters from me, which will serve to explain my motives for wishing you to retain the second command of this expedition. I am persuaded that a full consideration of the question will induce you to agree with me in opinion, that the extent of the force to be employed rendered it necessary to appoint a general officer to the chief command; while the sudden call to active service, precluded the possibility of removing you from the second command without injuring your character, or of leaving you officially the power of option, without reproach upon the impartiality and justice of my administration. You will, however, exercise your judgment upon the propriety of desiring leave to return to Mysore;† and if you should retain your anxiety on that subject, I shall not attempt to obstruct your wishes, nor shall I feel any sentiment of unkindness upon the transaction; but my decided

* “I fear, my dear Arthur, that you will have quitted Bombay before this letter can reach you. Act as you shall think best, without any apprehension of displeasing Mornington; for I am certain he will approve whatever step you take, upon full consideration.”—*Hon. Gen. Wellesley, March 28, 1801.*

† “I am not without hopes that I shall be relieved from this command, and that I shall soon return to my old station. Lord Wellesley, in a late letter, proposes this measure; and I assure you that I shall receive my successor with great satisfaction.”—*Colonel Wellesley to Lieut.-Col. Close.*

opinion is, that you will best satisfy the call of your public duty, and maintain the reputation of your public spirit, by serving cheerfully and zealously in your present situation."

The request of the Governor-General was cheerfully acceded to—Colonel Wellesley at once consented to take a command under General Baird; and letters, which passed subsequently between these officers, show with what sincerity the Colonel had determined to forget every feeling of previous disappointment, and unite cordially with his rival in carrying out the objects of the intended expedition. But it was fated that he should not accompany Baird to Egypt.

"On the 3d of April, just as every arrangement was complete, he was seized with a return of intermitting fever, which had previously attacked him at Trincomalee. His anxiety to embark was with difficulty refrained, by the injunctions of Mr. Scott, the surgeon. He had resolved to go, and to that determination he adhered until the last moment, thinking, as he said, that the voyage would be of service to him, and that he should be completely recovered, long before the expedition reached Mocha.

"But these expectations were, unfortunately, not realized in the sequel; and, on the 5th of April, the day which General Baird had fixed for the embarkation, Colonel Wellesley was pronounced incapable of proceeding.*

Colonel Wellesley's recovery was tedious. The fever, as it frequently does in the East, occasioned a painful eruption; and, consequently, all idea of his being able to follow the army, which had proceeded on its destination, was abandoned. Lord Mornington, finding his brother's services rendered unavailable by bad health, restored him to his government in the Mysore; and the General Order that notified his appointment, conveyed the thanks of the Governor-General to the meritorious officer, who had held the intermediate command.

* Hook's Life of Baird.

"Fort St. George, April 20, 1801.

"The Governor in Council takes this opportunity of expressing his Lordship's high sense and approbation of the conduct of Colonel Stevenson, in the command of the forces in Mysore, during the absence of the Hon. Colonel Wellesley; and the eminent success which has attended the operations entrusted to that officer in Malabar, having entitled him to the distinguished mark of his Lordship's approbation, the Governor in Council has resolved to appoint Colonel Stevenson to the special command of the provinces of Malabar and Canara, under the orders of the officer commanding in Mysore."



CHAPTER VII.

**COLONEL WELLESLEY RETURNS TO MYSORE—PEACE OF INDIA THREATENED—
GEOGRAPHICAL POSITIONS—PRESENT STATE OF THE MARHATTA POWERS—
SCINDIAH—HOLKAR CORPS OF OBSERVATION ASSEMBLED ON THE POONAH
FRONTIER—COLONEL WELLESLEY APPOINTED A MAJOR-GENERAL, AND
NOMINATED TO A COMMAND—MILITARY MEMORANDUM—OPENING OF THE
CAMPAIGN—ADVANCE ON POONAH—NEGOTIATIONS—GENERAL WELLESLEY
COMMENCES HOSTILITIES—AHMEDNUGGUR—PETTAH CARRIED BY ASSAULT
—FATAL DUEL—ANECDOTE OF GENERAL WELLESLEY—THE FORT SUR-
RENDERS—VALUABLE PROPERTY FOUND THERE.**

ON resuming his command, Colonel Wellesley applied himself assiduously to the duties of his government. The rigid justice with which he caused native rights to be respected, had obtained the confidence of the people during his former administration at Mysore; and, from the spirit of his own despatches, it would appear that this firm impartiality had in no way been relaxed on his return. In his government, no distinction of caste or colour warped him in his decisions, or aggravated or extenuated an offence; and the humblest Hindu, if aggrieved, had but to complain, and have his injuries redressed.*

* "The history of Captain ——'s conduct is quite shocking. A particular caution was given by me to Lieutenant Colonel Mignan, when I desired him to send these troops through the Rajah's country; which caution I conclude he gave to Captain ——. There is no remedy for this conduct, excepting to bring this gentleman to a court martial as soon as possible; and I shall be obliged to you if you will write me a public letter upon this subject.

* * * * *

"The bygarry system is not bearable; it must be abolished entirely, or so arranged and modified as to render it certain that the unfortunate people

It is said, that Colonel Wellesley painfully regretted the untoward event, which prevented him from accompanying the Egyptian expedition. When he did, the page of destiny was closed; and he little dreamed of that brilliant career which lay immediately before him. The tranquillity of the East was overclouded again: a formidable hostility to British interests, had been gaining strength among the Marhattas; and India was once more hurrying to the customary termination of Oriental diplomacy—an appeal to the sword.

To understand the progress of the campaign in the Deccan, it will be necessary to keep the geographical position of the country in recollection. That part of India, north of the Nerbudda, is called Hindustan Proper; that, between the Nerbudda and the Kistna, forms the Deccan; while on the south of the Kistna, lie the Carnatic, Malabar, and Mysore. From north to south, stretching from Delhi to the Toombuddra, the Marhatta territories extended 970 miles; and across the Peninsula, from the Bay of Bengal to the Gulf Cambuy, the breadth was about 900. The country, generally, was well inhabited and fertile; its population amounting to forty millions of souls, of whom nine-tenths were Hindu, and the remainder Mahommedan.

This immense empire was partitioned into five separate states; all, however, united in one confederacy, and under the nominal control of the descendant of the Rajah of Sattarah. But their interests were commonly at variance; each looked on the other with suspicion and alarm; and

employed as coolies are paid, are not carried farther than their usual stage, and are not ill-treated.

* * * * *

"Besides Captain ———, I have another Bombay gentleman in my eye, who has lately come through this country with a convoy of arrack, and I suspect played the same tricks; that is to say, never paid the people pressed and employed by him in the public service. I have desired that inquiries may be made upon the subject; and if I find my conjectures to be founded, I shall try him at the same time with Captain ———." *Wellington Despatches.*

hence, a collective force of 300,000 men, was in a great measure paralyzed by mutual jealousies and disunion.

The empire had been founded originally by the son of the Rajah of Sattarah; but like other Indian dynasties, the feebleness of his descendants permitted that acquired power to be usurped. The minister became Peshwah, or Chief Magistrate—the appointment was made hereditary—and while the grandson of the founder was confined in the durance of a palace; the son of Bellagee, held a court at Poonah, and actually controlled every department of the government.

The example of the Peshwah was not lost upon the other Rajahs; they, too, in time, asserted their independence—still however, in name at least, acknowledging the sovereignty of Sattarah.

Of the whole, Scindiah and Holkar were the most powerful and ambitious; and, from conflict of interests, probably most opposed to each other's views. Scindiah's successes in Delhi and the Dooab had roused the ambition of his rival. The extent of his military establishment, had rendered Scindiah formidable indeed; and his army was no less remarkable for its numbers, than the superiority with which it had been organized.

It had been originally raised and disciplined by Mons. de Boigne, a native of Savoy, who entered the service in 1784, and formed eighteen battalions of regular infantry, which he officered with European adventurers, chiefly French. These brigades, with a body of cavalry, and a train of well-appointed artillery, were drilled on the European system. M. de Boigne afterwards augmented the regular infantry to 38,000, the cavalry to 8,000, and the artillery to 120 pieces of iron, and upwards of 150 pieces of brass ordnance. On quitting India, he was succeeded in his military command, authority, and titles, by M. Perron, a native and subject of France. To this officer Dowlut Rao Schindiah confided the government of his northern provinces; whilst he devoted his attention to the politics

of the Deccan, and to the maintenance of that ascendancy over the Peshwah and Court of Poonah, which his predecessor had so effectually established. In the exercise of this ascendancy, it was manifestly the main principle of his policy, under the influence of M. Perron's advice, to obstruct the interests and views of the British Government by every secret means, and encourage the introduction of French officers, both into his own army and that of the Peshwah.

The influence of Scindiah at the court of Poonah, was naturally regarded by Holkar with feelings of animosity, the more deadly, from their being from necessity concealed. To check the increasing power of the rival Rajah, it was necessary that Holkar should place his army on a footing similar to that of the Peshwah. Consequently, Europeans were employed to drill and command his troops—and as multitudes of military adventurers had made their way to Hindustan, they were eagerly encouraged and retained. Hence, of the three armies belonging to the Peshwah, Scindiah, and Holkar, more than three-fourths of their officers were natives of France, or mercenaries, who had left the service of the Republic, to seek for fortune in the East.

The immediate neighbourhood of the Nizam to the Marhatta country must also be recollected.* The territories of his Highness bounded on the east and south those of Scindiah, the Peshwah, and the Rajah of Berar. The dominions of the Nizam embraced the country between the rivers Kistna, Godavery, and Werda—the seat of government being established at Hyderabad.

Although the court of Poonah had acquiesced in the war against Tippoo Sultaun, it seemed indifferent regarding its

* "The Mysore is very defenceless towards the Marhatta territory; a body of Marhatta horse would overrun the whole of the rich province of Bednore—would plunder Bednore itself—and might push their devastations to within sixty miles of Seringapatam, without the chance of danger or molestation."—*Wellington Despatches.*

success; and the secret influence of Scindiah was busily employed to impede, if possible, a final settlement of the Mysore. To induce the Peshwah to ally himself to the British Government, a portion of the Mysore, on its dismemberment, had been offered for his acceptance; at the same time similar overtures being made to Scindiah—but by both the offers were rejected. In consequence, the acquired territory was partitioned between the English and the Nizam, with the exception of that portion, conferred upon the descendants of the Hindu Rājahs.

The refusal of the Peshwah to accept the addition thus offered to his territories, evinced the unfriendliness of his disposition; and as his position, on the most vulnerable point of the British dominions, must be dreaded, the Marquess Wellesley endeavoured by fresh alliances to render Scindiah's animosity innocuous. Guickwar, chief of Guzerat, was subsidized—but the overtures made by the British Resident at Poonah to the Peshwah, were declined.

At this juncture of affairs, Scindiah and Holkar were at variance; and the latter having crossed the Nerbudda, advanced within a few marches of Poonah; and Scindiah's troops, under Suddasheo Bhow, were despatched for its defence. A general engagement resulted, and the united armies of Scindiah and the Peshwah “sustained a complete defeat.” The Peshwah, whose conduct was most pusillanimous, abandoned his capital on the morning of the discomfiture; first soliciting British assistance, through the mediation of the Resident at Poonah.

His overtures were accepted—an agreement was arranged by the Resident, and ratified by the Governor-General; and the British Government determined that the Peshwah's authority should be restored. An offer also was made to Scindiah to include him in the same treaty; and Colonel Collins was despatched, for that purpose, as a plenipotentiary.

But for a long time, Scindiah had been only waiting for a favourable opportunity, to display his hostility to the

British Government. He had been notoriously in secret correspondence with Tippoo, and it was suspected that he had been largely subsidized by the late Sultaun.*

Holkar, on finding that the Peshwah had retired to the fortress of Mhar, in the Konkan, raised Amrut Rao to the musnud of Poonah, and named his father minister; himself retaining the command of the troops, and virtually directing the government.

These occurrences in the Marhatta country of course alarmed the Governor-General; and a corps of observation was ordered to assemble on the southern frontier of the Poonah country, to secure the British possessions, as well as the territories of the Nizam and the Rajah of Mysore. In the mean time, the Government at Madras had also taken the alarm, and assembled a *corps-d'armée* of 19,000 men on the north-west frontier of the Mysore. The head quarters were at Hurryhur, and the command was given to General Stuart. Indeed, the note of preparation had sounded over the Indian peninsula. The Presidency of Bombay got all its disposable force ready for the field; and the subsidiary force at Hyderabad, were ordered to prepare for service.

On the 29th of April 1802, Colonel Wellesley had been gazetted a Major-General, and was appointed by Lord Mornington to the command of a division, which was intended to form an advanced corps to the army of Madras, then on its march towards the banks of the Toombuddra.

A letter received by Major-General Wellesley in the preceding November, from Mr. Webbe, notified that operations in the Marhatta country were likely to occur; and the General applied himself, with his usual zeal, to effect the necessary preparations.†

* "Tippoo sent thirty-eight camel-loads of money, about two months ago, to Scindiah, with a view of securing him as an ally. The latter took the money; but said, he would not leave the durbar of Poonah till next year."—*Asiatic Register*, 1799, p. 155.

† *Vide* Colonel Wellesley's Journal, Wellington Despatches, Vol. I.

His previous acquaintance with what was required in an Indian campaign, could now be turned to excellent advantage ; and from a very able memorandum drawn up by the General, based on the experience he had acquired in his contest with Dhoondiah Waugh, and designed, “ for the benefit of those, in whose hands might be placed the conduct of the operations of the army, in the event of a Marhatta war, the following interesting extract is taken :—

“ The season at which it is most convenient to commence a campaign with the Marhattas, is that at which the rivers, which take their rise in the western ghauts, fill. This happens generally in the month of June.

* * * * *

“ The reasons why I think that the most favourable season for operations against the Marhatta nation, are as follows :—

“ 1st. The Marhatta army is principally composed of cavalry ; and their plan of operations against a British army would be to endeavour to cut off its communication with its rear, and to impede the junction of its supplies from the Mysore country. As the rivers are not fordable, as there are no bridges, and no means of passing them excepting by basket boats, which it is difficult, and might be rendered impossible to procure, the fulness of the rivers operates as a barrier. It is certain that the enemy cannot pass them in large numbers ; and it is probable that they would not venture to throw across a small body, or rather that they would not be able to prevail upon a small body to remain on a different side from the main body of their army.

“ The inconvenience and delay which the British army experience in crossing the rivers by means of boats, when they are full, is trifling ; and in fact they would experience no inconvenience or delay, if good pontoons were provided, and a bridge were thrown across each river for the passage of the army.

“ The communication might afterwards be kept up by

means of the common basket boats. If the army should be thus equipped with a bridge, the Marhattas would never dare to detach a body across any river for the purpose of annoying our communications. Thus, then, we should enjoy all the advantage of a river not fordable, to shorten the line of our communication, which river our enemy could not pass with a large body of troops, and over which he would not dare to detach a small body; and we should have it in our power to pass it with as much ease, and with as little inconvenience and delay, as we should experience if the river were fordable.

“2d. The Marhatta country, in general, is but ill supplied with water. The rains which fill these rivers, although not heavy at the beginning of the rainy season, are sufficient to fill many nullahs; and an army has at this time some chance of being supplied with water, of which, in the dry season, it is certain it would never find much, and frequently none. The inconvenience to be apprehended from the rains is trifling. It is true that, heavy rain would ruin the cattle of the army, and would put the roads in such a state as to render them impracticable for wheel carriages. But heavy rain for any long continuance, is not to be expected in the Marhatta territory, and particularly not early in the season. During the last season, which was extraordinarily severe upon the coast, we had only two days of distressing rain; but we had some rain nearly on every day.

“The Marhatta country is in general a fine black soil, very fertile, and highly cultivated. The roads are all excellent, excepting when the rain is heavy. At that time the black cotton mould becomes a swamp, through which it is scarcely practicable for a man to move; the wheels of the carriages sink to their axletrees, are clogged with mud, and it is impossible for the cattle to draw them.

“The produce of this fertile country is jowarry principally, and other dry grains, but no rice. This is the great difficulty with which our army would have to contend.

The rice, which must be procured for them, must be brought from the distant rice countries in Mysore, or from Canara, with which country, in the rainy season, it is impossible to keep up a communication.

"The army also might depend upon procuring some sheep and bullocks in the Marhatta territory; but if its European force should be large, it will certainly require supplies of the former from Mysore, and, in any case, supplies from thence of the latter.

"It is well known that jowarry straw is the best kind of forage for horses and cattle; and of this there is an abundance every where; and besides this forage, it seldom happens that green forage cannot be found.

"The means of defending this country are trifling; and it must depend upon the strength of the army which is in it, compared with that of the British army. All the strong places are liable to be carried by assault, excepting, perhaps, Darwar or Kooshgul; and it is doubtful whether these last might not be thus taken if attacked by resolute troops."*

The opening of the campaign devolved on General Wellesley. He had been directed to advance on Poonah,† in concert with the subsidiary force of the Deccan, commanded by Colonel Stevenson, to drive Holkar from the capital, and secure the return of the Peshwah. Accordingly he commenced his march from Hurryhur on the 9th of March, and crossed the Toombuddra river on the 12th. The progress of the British troops through the Marhatta

* Wellington Despatches.

† "Poonah, washed on the north by the Mootah river, was about three miles in length, and two in breadth, and was said to contain 140,000 houses, which by a moderate calculation, would give 600,000 inhabitants; but this seemed an exaggeration. It was, however, extremely crowded, with both inhabitants and people of all descriptions. The streets, as in most native towns, were extremely narrow, and full of bazaars, which contained an innumerable quantity of articles of merchandise, the produce not only of India, but of China and Europe. The houses were some three or four stories high, but built without much regard to taste or symmetry; though, being diversified in size, shape, and colour, they had a pretty appearance from a distance. The view from the

territories was most successful. They were everywhere received as friends, and almost all the chiefs, in the vicinity of the route of the detachment, joined with their forces, and accompanied the British army to Poonah. The amicable conduct of the jaghiredars and of the inhabitants (arising principally from the fame which the British arms had acquired in the campaign under Major-General Wellesley's command against Dhoondiah Waugh) contributed to enable our army to perform this long march, at a most unfavourable season of the year, without loss or distress."*

A circumstance occurred which occasioned much alarm for the safety of the city, and accelerated General Wellesley's movements. Leaving most of his infantry on the road, he made a forced march upon the capital, where he arrived on the 20th, in good time to prevent the mischief which had been apprehended. He thus details the movement, in a letter to Colonel Close :—

"Poonah, April 20, 1803.

"After I wrote to you on the 18th, I heard that Amrut Rao still remained in the neighbourhood of Poonah; that he had removed the Peshwah's family to Sevaghur; that many people were flying, and all believed that the town would be burnt. In consequence of this information, I marched last night with the cavalry and a battalion, and arrived here this day at about two, and the town is safe.

* * * * *

I was detained about six hours in getting the cavalry guns through the Bho-re-ghaut, in consequence of which, I opposite side of the river was the most imposing; as that part of the town which was washed by the stream, being faced with stone, descending, in many parts, by regular steps to the water's edge, and having trees intermingled with the houses, presented an appearance very far from despicable; although a stranger, set down at once in any of the streets, could hardly credit the assertion. The fruit bazaars were well supplied with musk and water-melons, plantains, figs, dates, raisins, mangoes, pomegranates, wood-apples, almonds, and a great variety of country vegetables. In short, it appeared to us a place of great wealth, which had concentrated the entire trade of the empire."—*Welsh.*

* Munro's Letters.

imagine that Amrut Rao received intelligence of my march, in such time, as to enable him to depart this morning before I arrived.

“The infantry will be here on the day after to-morrow, and on the next day I shall move towards the ghauts.

“We have marched sixty miles since yesterday morning.”*

On the 13th of May the Peshwah entered the capital; “and it was hoped that Scindiah would return quietly to his own country. This hope was vain. Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, who were together in the field, made a menacing movement towards the frontier of our ally, the Nizam.

“Information was just at this time received of a secret and active correspondence between Scindiah and Holkar; and it was privately known that a league, hostile to the British, was on the very eve of being concluded.”†

• Wellington Despatches.

† Sherer.

سارنگ شاہ عالم بادشاہ غنائے
 باجی راو رکشا نہ نہ بھا در فہ و
 فرزندہ الخاص معالجہ پندرہ ماہی لہجہ کوا
 منسوزہ ماہ ناپالہ سعادہ وکیل مطلق امیر الامرا
 مہاراجہ دہلی سید مہاراجہ سہاسنہ
 حمد اللہ مرا فرزند ارجمند علیجاہ

SCINDIAH'S AFTER SEAL.

Anticipating the issue of this confederacy, the Marquess Wellesley appointed Lord Lake to the command of the army of Hindustan; and his Lordship, with General Wellesley, was invested with the fullest authority, military and political. No time was lost by the latter in exercising his discretionary powers. He demanded at once that Scindiah should retire behind the Nerbudda, and separate his army from that of the Rajah of Berar, undertaking that the British and ~~native~~ troops should immediately retire ~~from~~ the field, and resume their ordinary cantonments.

With the usual duplicity of Eastern princes, the demand of explanation was received with specious excuses, and the customary delay that attends the proceedings of oriental diplomacy. The object was easily seen through—time was wanted to mature their plans, and confederate others who were unfriendly to the British interests. General Wellesley, at once, penetrated their designs, and determined to render them unavailing. Having waited the result of the negotiation then in progress, at the camp near Walkee, on the first intelligence of Colonel Collins having quitted Scindiah's camp, the General put the army into motion, and directed his march upon the ancient city of Ahmednuggur.

"The Fort of Ahmednuggur is one of the strongest in India, built of solid stone and chunam,* surrounded by a deep dry ditch, with large circular bastions at short intervals, and armed with three or four guns in casemated embrasures, with a terrace above, and loop-holes for musketry. The bastions are unusually lofty, the curtains short and low, with loop-holes in their narrow ramparts for musketry. The guns (some sixty pieces) upon the bastions were numerous, ranging in their calibre from twelves to fifty-twos; but the casemates were too confined to allow their being effectively employed. The glacis was so abrupt as to cover nearly thirty feet of the walls, affording shelter for an enemy if they could only get close to the place."†

* A strong Indian cement.

† Military Reminiscences.

The march of General Wellesley to Ahmednuggur had been unopposed; and on the 8th of August the army reached the place. "We had not," says Colonel Welsh, "hitherto seen the face of an enemy; and now for the first time perceived the walls of both the Pettah* and fort lined with men, whose arms glittered in the sun, whilst another body of troops was encamped outside between them. As we stood with the General, reconnoitring from a small elevated spot, within long-gun shot of both places, he directed the leaders where they were to fix their ladders; but unaware that there was no rampart, we were ordered to escalade the curtains, without breaching. The fort lay on our right hand, and the Pettah in front, within gun-shot of each other. The first column was ordered to attempt a long curtain to the extreme left, having a high building immediately in its rear. The ladders were planted, and the assault made, but each man as he ascended fell, hurled from the top of the wall. This unequal struggle lasted about ten minutes, when they desisted, with the loss of about fifteen killed, and fifty wounded. Amongst the killed were Captains Duncan, Grant, Mackenzie, Hum-bustone, and Anderson; Lieutenant Larkins being mortally wounded. The third party to the right advanced nearly at the same moment, but a gun elephant taking fright at the firing from the fort, ran down the centre of our column, which occasioned no little confusion, and some delay; thus giving the enemy more time and means to oppose the first attack. Being furnished with two scaling-ladders only, we reached the curtain, and planted them at the very re-entering angle, formed by a small bastion, the enemy opening some heavy guns on us from the fort. Such a rush was made at

* "The Pettah of Ahmednuggur is a very large and regular native town, surrounded by a wall of stone and mud, about eighteen feet high, and very neatly built, with small bastions at every hundred yards, but no rampart to the curtains, the wall being rounded off at the top, and scarcely broad enough for a man to stand upon. It was garrisoned by 3000 Marhattas, and 1500 Arab mercenaries."—*Welsh*.

first, that one ladder broke down, with our gallant leader and several men, and we were forced to work hard with the other. Captain Vesey was soon on the bastion, again surrounded by men determined to carry every thing before them. Our two European companies had all scrambled up, and about one hundred and fifty, or two hundred of the 3d, when a cannon-shot smashed our last ladder, and broke the thigh of my Subadar. We were now a party of three hundred men, left solely to our own resources, and dashing down, we scoured all the streets near the wall, the enemy only once making a stand, and suffering accordingly. At length arriving near a gate, marked out for the centre attack, and a loud peal of cannon and musketry from without announcing the second party, under Colonel Wallace, we drove all the defenders before us, and some of our men opened the gate whilst they were battering at it from the outside.* The enemy were driven from the town, most of them escaping to the country, and a few succeeding in entering the fort.

The casualties of the Anglo-Indian army amounted to about one hundred and forty men.

A professed duellist is a public nuisance; but from such a curse, a military community is pretty safe. Its friendly and polished intercourse has that restrictive check which inhibits coarse familiarity, and hence its harmony is very rarely disturbed. At times, however, and from the most trifling causes, a whole corps has been unsettled; and the bad temper or bad conduct of an individual, proved ruinous to the unanimity of a regiment. To no military offending should the attention of a commanding officer be more promptly addressed. The mischief should be crushed in the outset; and the censure of the superior officer, conveyed in language that marked his displeasure, and admitted no ambiguous construction, under which the criminal might palliate his punishment.

* Military Reminiscences, by Colonel Welsh.

A circumstance, of a painful character, which occurred at this time, has elicited these cursory remarks; and the particulars of the transaction are thus related by an Indian officer, and shows with what unmeasured indignation General Wellesley marked his detestation of a scoundrel, who, instead of accommodating a trifling misunderstanding, hurried the affair to a fatal crisis, which deprived the service of two valuable men.

“Captain Duncan Grant, the first man killed in our army, was a young officer of great promise, and endeared to every one who had the happiness of knowing him. In the same corps, (his Majesty’s 78th Highland regiment,) there was an old and most respectable officer, Captain Browne, who commanded the grenadiers, and had a piper attached to his company. This gentleman was, by many years, older than any other in the regiment. He had been unfortunate in promotion, was rather cold and serious in his manners, and being an Englishman, he did not mix much with his new comrades. One evening, about the beginning of August, Grant had given a party to a number of young men, at his own tent in the lines, and sending for the piper, they amused themselves by listening to his pibrochs, and dancing to his reels. To such a party it would have been an idle compliment to have invited Captain Browne; but situated as their tents were, it was impossible for him not to be aware, of what appeared to him, the unlicensed use made of his piper. Next evening, when the officers assembled in front of the parade, he addressed himself to Captain Grant, and expressed his surprise that he should have sent for the man without making a previous application to him: Grant carelessly replied, ‘that he did not conceive such an application necessary, and that he should send for the piper whenever he pleased.’ Captain Browne, with great solemnity, observed, ‘Sir, you are a boy; and nobody but a boy would tell me so.’

“The parade broke up, and Captain Grant requested a lieutenant to go to Captain Browne, and tell him, that he

Keller

could not rest satisfied, without some apology for the expressions he had made use of; at the same time declaring, that he bore him no enmity, and would be satisfied with the slightest concession.

“The person unfortunately chosen as a friend on this occasion, proved unworthy of confidence—and instead of preventing a meeting, he was accused of fermenting the affair, until a challenge was given and received. The parties met, and fired together; the ball from Grant’s pistol depriving his brother officer of life, and the service of a gallant soldier.

“The execrated individual, who was more than suspected of producing this lamentable affair, being two days afterwards engaged in a personal quarrel with another officer, and displaying in the conduct of the business a brutal ferocity, was turned out of camp by General Wellesley the night before we marched to Ahmednuggur—to use the General’s words—‘that such a wretch might not have an opportunity of sharing in the honours of an army, which he had thus disgraced.’ Poor Grant was placed in arrest, and seemed deeply to lament the mischief he had done. When riding by my side on the march, he suddenly seized my hand with energy, and pressed it, without uttering a word; then rode off, and, unarmed as he was, rushed up, the first man, to the top of the ladder, from which he fell a lifeless corpse!”

On the 10th, General Wellesley commenced firing on the fort,* and the Killedar proposed to treat for its surrender, requesting, that while terms were under consideration, the battery should cease. The British General acceded to the former part of his request; but the cannonade never slackened, except for the short time necessary to permit the

* Gocklah, a Marhatta chief, residing in our camp with a body of horse, wrote thus to his friends at Poonah:—“These English are a strange people, and their General a wonderful man; they came here in the morning, looked at the Pettah wall, walked over it, killed all the garrison, and returned to breakfast! What can withstand them?”

guns to cool. On the next morning, the Killedar sent out his vakeels; terms were made; and, on the 12th, the garrison marched out, and the fort was occupied by a detachment of the British army. The conquest was one of much importance. Ahmednuggur secured the communications with Poonah, and, from its central situation, became a most useful depôt. In another view, its possession was desirable, it being the capital of a fertile district, which produced a considerable revenue.*

A palace of Scindiah was in the fort; and, with some other extensive buildings there, it bore the appearance of having been originally a place of considerable splendour. An immense quantity of valuables were discovered in the royal residence; and a scene of plunder had commenced, which could only be arrested by hanging a couple of native soldiers in the gateway, as an example to deter the rest. The property found in the palace was of a varied description; Colonel Welsh thus describes them:—

“It is difficult to enumerate the articles which were thus suddenly exposed to view. On entering with the General, I observed, in two apartments only, several dozens of large handsome pier-glasses, two electrifying machines, an organ, a piano-forte, lustres, chandeliers, globes, and many other similar luxuries; in others, the richest stuffs of India, gold and silver cloths, splendid armour, silks, satins, velvets, furs, shawls, plate, cash, &c. &c.” When to these are added, the property carried off by the Killedar,

* Estimate of the gross revenue of the conquered province of Ahmednuggur, late under the dominion of Dowlah Rao Scindiah; taken from the verbal communication of the principal Zemindar, immediately after the conquest:—

	VILLAGES.	RUPEES.
South of the Godavery . . .	116 producing	337,000
North of the Godavery . . .	71 ...	297,000
Total	187	634,000

Much reliance cannot be placed on the accuracy of this statement. I think it probable that the revenues are rather under than over rated.—*Report of the Official Agent.*

on an elephant, with several carts, camels, and horses, the fort and palace must have contained an immense collection of valuable spoil.

An official order, by the Governor-General, dated the 8th of September, from Fort-William, conveyed to the commanding officer and troops engaged in the reduction of the fortress, a flattering testimonial both as regarded the value of the conquest, and the daring gallantry with which it was achieved.



CHAPTER VIII.

MARHATTA MOVEMENTS—DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING SUPPLIES—OCCUPATION OF AURUNGABAD—MARHATTA FORCES CONCENTRATE—PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR ATTACKING THEM—MARHATTA CAMP, NUMBERS AND POSITION—BATTLE OF ASSYE—OBSERVATIONS—DEATH OF COLONEL MAXWELL—ANECDOTES.

WHEN apprised that Ahmednuggur had fallen, Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar put their immense armies into motion,* while Wellesley advanced towards the Godavery, and reached Toka on the 21st of August. Here, the English General had decided upon crossing the river immediately below the junction of two of its most considerable streams. After a tedious and dangerous operation, which lasted from the 21st to the 28th, the passage was effected; a few men, with several horses and bullocks, having been swept down the stream and drowned.†

A forward movement was most advisable; but great difficulties presented themselves in consequence of the country through which the line of march ran, affording no supplies from which a general might subsist an army. In writing to Major Shawe, General Wellesley mentions his apprehensions on that head. The letter is written from the camp at Toka, and dated the 24th of August:—

* *Army of Scindiah.*—Cavalry, 18,500; infantry, 11 battalions; matchlock-men, 500; heavy ordnance, 35 guns; light ditto, 170.

Army of the Rajah of Berar.—Cavalry, 20,000; infantry, 6000; artillery, 35 pieces; camel guns, 500; rocket men, 500.

This was their estimated force when on the Nizam's frontier, on the 5th July.

† Colonel Welsh.

“ Twelve days have elapsed since I took Ahmed-nuggur, and in that time I have marched nearly fifty miles, and have crossed the river Godavery, having settled our conquests south of that river. I hope to get on equally well in future; but I tremble for the want of the common country grains for the followers and cattle. The country is completely exhausted, the villages depopulated, and large tracts of excellent land uncultivated. Indeed, I believe that these facts are the principal causes of Holkar's keeping aloof from the confederates. We have lost such numbers of cattle by the length of our march and starvation, that we have none to carry grain for our followers; and I learn that we have lost vast numbers of those coming from General Stuart's army; I believe nearly one-half of the whole number.

“ However, large numbers of dealers attend the camp, who came with me from Mysore; and if the Nizam's servants afford us any supplies, we shall still do tolerably well. I have plenty for the troops, and it may be depended upon, that I will do every thing in my power to procure what is wanted for the followers.”

The General continued his operations. On the 26th, he was reinforced by the first battalion of the 10th regiment under Major Dallas, who had escorted safely from Bellary, two thousand bullocks loaded with supplies, with three lacs of pagodas for the use of the army. The march had been made in nineteen days without a halt; and the opportune arrival of the convoy, enabled the English General to continue his advance towards Aurungabad, which place he entered without opposition on the 29th.

This city, once so celebrated for its magnificence, had undergone the fate of others, and “its glory had departed.” It now presented to the eye a mighty mass of splendid ruins,—for, with the exception of a few palaces in tolerable repair, and the beautiful mosque and mausoleum of white marble, erected by the Emperor Aurungzebe to the memory of his favourite wife, there was nothing within the

mighty extent of its walls* which did not exhibit a melancholy evidence of what time and change of empire will effect.

Scindiah, on finding that Aurungabad had fallen, made a movement as if to threaten Hyderabad; and for the double purpose of protecting that city, and securing large convoys on their route to join his army, General Wellesley, by marching on the eastern bank of the Godavery, effected these important objects. Colonel Stevenson was also actively employed. He carried the fort of Jaulna by assault; and by a night attack, dispersed a considerable body of the enemy. Hitherto the confederated chiefs had only hung upon the flanks of the English with an immense cavalry force,† supported by an inconsiderable body of matchlock men, but now they were joined by sixteen battalions of regular infantry, and a train of artillery amounting to nearly one hundred guns; the whole *corps d'armée*, at a moderate computation, exceeding fifty thousand fighting men.

The enemy having encamped at Boherdun, at the

* The walls are said by the natives to be fifteen coss in circumference, but fifteen miles would be the more accurate measurement.

† The Marhatta cavalry is divided into four distinct classes: the body guards of the princes; the troops furnished by the Silladars; the volunteers, who find their own horses, arms, and accoutrements; and the pindaries, who serve without pay, and subsist entirely by plunder. This last class, however, is so licentious, that it is little employed in the armies of the principal chieftains. No class, except the body guards, are under regular discipline, nor enlisted for any stated period; and, except mounting piquet guards in camp, the cavalry do no duty but in the day of battle. These irregularities, together with the circumstance of the whole of the cavalry being badly paid, encourage the native predatory disposition of the Marhatta people, and obstruct their advancement in civil life, as well as in military discipline.

Their horses, which are partly reared in their own provinces, and partly brought from Candahar and Tibet, are remarkable for their hardiness, activity, and speed: and there are no people in the world who are more skilful in the breeding of that animal, or who attend to it with such unremitting industry. The Marhattas are thus accustomed, from their infancy, to the use and management of horses; and hence arises that extraordinary dexterity in horsemanship, which their troopers so frequently display.

distance of two marches, it was determined that a combined attack should be made upon their forces without delay ; and General Wellesley held a conference with Colonel Stevenson for this purpose on the 21st of September.

It was arranged that the attack should be made on the 24th, the armies advancing in two divisions,* to avoid the delay that must otherwise occur, by moving, *en masse*, through a narrow and difficult defile. Accordingly, on the 22d, Colonel Stevenson marched by the western route, while General Wellesley took an easterly direction, following the more direct road which leads round the hills between Budnapoor and Jalna.

On the 23d, the Major-General arrived at Naulniah ; and the hircarrahs announced, that the confederated chiefs had retired with the whole of their cavalry that morning, leaving their infantry to follow, who were, however, still encamped at the distance of two leagues. This intelligence—which afterwards proved untrue—induced Wellesley to attack the enemy without delay.

Leaving his baggage with a rear-guard, reinforced by the 1st battalion of the 2d regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers, and having despatched messengers to hurry the movements of Colonel Stevenson, he resumed his operations—and at noon he found himself, after a severe march, most unexpectedly in front of the entire of the Marhatta armies.

The position of the allied chiefs extended from Boherdun to the village of Assye, having the Kaitna in their front, and from the steepness of its banks, that river was impassable to carriages, except at the fords of Peepulgaon and Warson. Nothing could be more picturesque than

* The motive for this separation, though it may be doubted whether it was a sufficient one for a division in the neighbourhood of so great a force, was the difficulty of getting forward the united army through the narrow defiles by which both roads passed, and the chance that, if they both moved by one line, the enemy would retire by another, and the opportunity of striking a decisive blow be lost."—*Alison's History of Europe*, vol. vii. p. 164.

the appearance of the Marhatta camp*—nothing more imposing than the multitudinous force drawn up in order of battle. "The sight was enough to appal the stoutest heart. Thirty thousand horse in one magnificent mass, crowded the right; a dense array of infantry, powerfully supported by artillery, formed the centre and left; the gunners were beside their pieces, and a hundred pieces of cannon in front of the line, stood ready to vomit forth death upon the assailants. Wellesley paused for a moment, impressed but not daunted by the sight; his whole force, as Colonel Stevenson had not come up, did not exceed eight thousand men, of whom sixteen hundred were cavalry; the effective native British were not above fifteen hundred; and he had only seventeen pieces of cannon."†

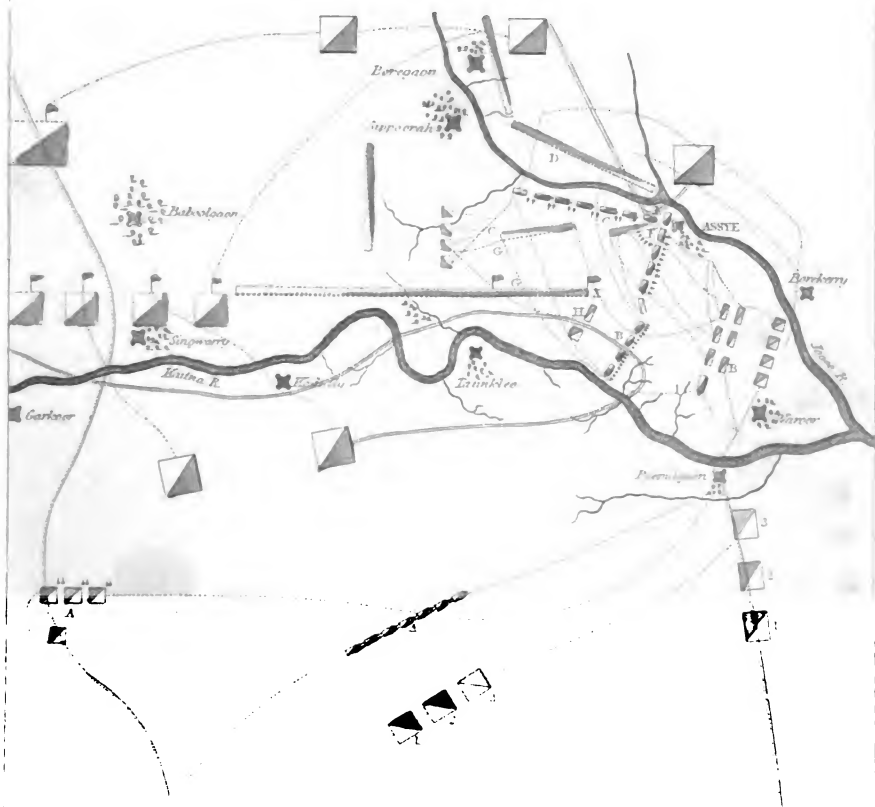
As the British cavalry came up, they formed line on the heights, and presented a strange but glorious contrast to the countless multitude of Marhatta horsemen, who were seen in endless array below. The English brigade, scarcely numbering sixteen hundred sabres, took its position with all the boldness of a body having an equal force opposed; although in number, Scindiah's cavalry were fully ten to one.

The columns having arrived, Wellesley changed his original intention of attacking the enemy's right, and determined to fall upon the left, which was composed entirely of infantry. The ground on which these battalions were drawn up, was a flat peninsula of inconsiderable size, formed by the union of the waters of the Kaitna with the Juah. The space was too confined to allow room for the Marhatta cavalry to operate to much advantage, "while the defeat of the corps of infantry was most likely to be

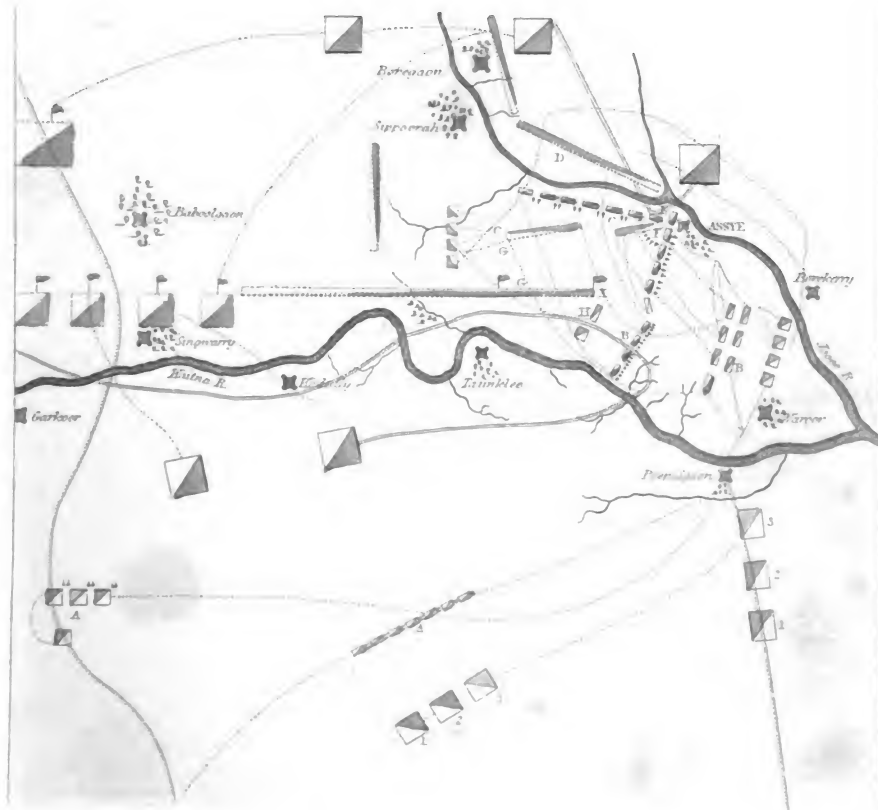
* The varied colours of the tents, each disposed around its own chieftain's banner without order or regularity, with "streets crossing and winding in every direction, displayed a variety of merchandise, as in a great fair. Jewellers, smiths, and mechanics, were all attending as minutely to their occupations, and all as busily employed, as if they were at Poona, and in peace."—*Victories of the British Army*.

† Alison's History, vol. vii. p. 165.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1894.



PLAN
OF THE
BATTLE OF ASSYE.
SEPTEMBER 23 1862



effectual." Accordingly, a lateral movement was made to the left,—the march of the column being covered on the right flank by the Mysore horse, and in the rear protected by the British cavalry, under Colonel Maxwell.

Having crossed the ford of Peepulgaon, which the enemy had neglected to defend, the British infantry were formed in two lines, supported by the cavalry, which were placed in line in reserve in the rear, on an open space between the Kaitna, and a nullah that ran in a parallel direction with its stream. While deploying, the Marhatta guns kept up a furious cannonade;* but undisturbed by a fire that was ably directed and well-sustained, the British dispositions for attack were coolly and promptly completed.

"The order of battle being thus skilfully changed, the infantry of Scindiah was compelled to present a new front. They did so with greater ease than was expected. The line they now formed reached with its right up to the Kaitna, and its left upon the village of Assye, on the Juah. The front now presented by the enemy was one vast battery, especially towards the left, so numerous and weighty were the guns, and so thickly were they disposed immediately near the village. The fire was rapid, furious, and terrible in execution; the British guns, few in number, opened as the line advanced, but were almost on the instant silenced. Their gunners dropped fast, and the cattle fell killed or lacerated beside them. With the fierceness of the struggle, and the fearfulness of the hazard, the undaunted spirit of the General rose. He at once abandoned the guns, and directed an advance with the bayonet: with the main body, he soon forced, and drove the enemy's right, possessing himself of their guns by a resolute charge."†

* General Wellesley's orderly dragoon was killed by a round shot immediately beside him. Writing to the Hon. Henry Wellesley, the General says,—“I lost two horses; Diomed (Colonel Aston's horse, who has carried me in so many campaigns) piked; and another horse shot under me. Almost all the staff had their horses either killed or wounded, or were struck in some place or other.”—*Letter to Hon. H. Wellesley, 3 Oct.*

† Shcrrer.

The pickets, with the 74th as a supporting regiment, were on the right of the two lines of infantry, and their attack was distinguished equally by the gallantry it exhibited, and the loss it produced. With unquestioned bravery, but bad judgment, the officer commanding, when he might have covered his men in a great degree by a circuitous movement, pushed forward directly against the village of Assye, thus of necessity crossing "a space swept like a glaciis by the cannon of the enemy." Overwhelmed by a murderous fire, the gallant band left half its number on the field. The men fell by dozens—and one company of those forming the pickets was almost annihilated. It went into action with an officer and fifty men; and in the evening four rank and file were all that survived that bloody day.

No wonder that the line under this tremendous fusilade from the village, supported by continuous showers of grape, was in many places fairly cut through, and that with difficulty it still maintained its ground. Perceiving its disorder, a cloud of Marhatta horsemen stole round the enclosures of Assye unperceived, and charged furiously into ranks already half destroyed. The moment was most critical. The mussulman sabres were crossing the bayonets of the 74th, and "feeble and few, but fearless still," that gallant regiment was desperately resisting. Colonel Maxwell, who had watched the progress of the fight, saw that the moment for action had arrived. The word was given,—the British cavalry charged home. Down went the Marhattas in hundreds, beneath the fiery assault of the brave 19th, and their gallant supporters the sepoy; while, unchecked by a tremendous storm of grape and musketry, Maxwell pressed his advantage, and cut through Scindiah's left. The 74th and the light infantry rallied, re-formed, pushed boldly on, and, the second line coming forward to their support, completed the disorder of the enemy, and prevented any effective attempt to renew a battle, the doubtful result of which was thus in a few

minutes decided by the promptitude of that well-directed charge.

Some of Scindiah's troops fought bravely. The desperate obstinacy with which his gunners stood to the cannon, was almost incredible. They remained to the last—and were bayoneted around the guns, which they refused, even in certain defeat, to abandon.

The British charge was resistless; but in the enthusiasm of success, at times there is a lack of prudence. The sepoys rushed wildly on—their elated ardour was uncontrollable—while a mass of the Marhatta horse were arrayed on the hill, ready to rush upon ranks disordered by their own success.

But General Wellesley had foreseen and guarded against the evil consequences a too excited courage might produce. The 78th were kept in hand; and supported by a regiment of native horse, they were now led forward by the General in person. The guns on the left were carried, and the village stormed with the bayonet. In this short but sanguinary attack, the 78th were highly distinguished. Their loss, from the severity of the enemy's fire, was severe, and General Wellesley had a horse killed under him.

A strong column of the enemy, that had been only partially engaged, now rallied and renewed the battle, joined by a number of Scindiah's gunners and infantry, who had flung themselves as dead upon the ground, and thus escaped the sabres of the British cavalry.* Maxwell's brigade, who had re-formed their ranks and breathed their horses, dashed into the still-disordered ranks of these half-rallied troops—a desperate slaughter ensued; the Marhattas were totally routed; but the British cavalry lost their chivalrous leader,

* "However, I do not wish to cast any reflection upon the officer who led the pickets. I lament the consequences of his mistake, but I must acknowledge that it was not possible for a man to lead a body into a hotter fire than he did the pickets on that day against Assye."—*Letter to Lieut.-Col. Munro, 1st Nov. Wellington Despatches.*

and in the moment of victory, Maxwell died in front of the battle, pressing on the pursuit of a mingled mob of all arms, who were flying in disorder from the field.

The rout was now complete. The sun at noon had shone on a proud array of fifty thousand men, drawn up in perfect order—he set upon a broken host, flying in dispersed bodies from a field, on which the whole *materiel* of an army remained abandoned. Under more desperate circumstances a battle was never fought; and, opposed by overwhelming masses,* a victory was never more completely won. Every thing at noon was against the conquerors—numbers, position, all that could render victory almost a certain event, lay with the Marhatta chieftains. Small as the British force was, its energies were weakened by a long and exhausting march beneath a sultry sky; and nothing but indomitable courage, could have sustained Wellesley's feeble battalions against the mighty masses to which they were opposed. Assye was indeed a glorious triumph—"It was a magnificent display of skill, moral courage, and perfect discipline, against native bravery and enormous physical superiority."† Nor were Scindiah's troops a body of men, rudely collected, ignorant of military tactics, and unused to combinations. In every arm the Marhatta army was respectable; and the facility with which they changed their front in the morning, proved that the instructions of their French officers had not been given in vain.

It has been asserted, that General Wellesley was blameable in hazarding an action with such inferior force, and

* The casualties at Assye were thus returned :—

Killed	428
Wounded	1138
Missing	18
Total	1584

† " Among the spoils of this memorable day, were a number of orderly books kept by European officers, from which it appeared that the Marhatta regular infantry amounted to ten thousand eight hundred men."—*Col. Welsh*



without the assistance of the remainder of his troops, who were advancing under Colonel Stevenson; but, every thing considered, the course he adopted, bold as it may appear, presented the best chances of proving ultimately successful. General Wellesley was deceived by the hircarrahs—and instead of the enemy being twelve miles distant from him at Boherdun, by the extension of their line eastward, they were within six miles of him at Assye. It was only when in the presence of the enemy, that the mistake in his information was discovered; and had he then attempted to retire upon Naulliah, he must have fallen back exposed to the attacks of an overwhelming cavalry, and thus sustained a considerable loss, besides endangering his baggage, which was but weakly guarded. It is true, that when relative numbers are considered, Wellesley becoming assailant at Assye, looks like an act of temerity difficult to justify; but situated as he was, “the most audacious course * was, in such circumstances, the most prudent;”† and, if the report of the prisoners could be believed, an engagement was inevitable; for Scindiah had determined on attacking, when he learned that Stevenson had been detached, and that consequently he should have but half his enemies to encounter.‡

* “In rebus asperis et tenui spe, fortissima quæque consilia tutissima sunt.”

† Alison.

‡ “Your principal objection to the action is, that I detached Colonel Stevenson. His was a separate corps, equally strong, if not stronger than mine. We were desirous to engage the enemy at the same time, and settled a plan accordingly for an attack on the morning of the 24th. We separated on the 22d, he to march by the western, I by the eastern route, round the hills between Budnapoor and Jaulna; and I have to observe, that this separation was necessary; first, because both corps could not pass through the same defiles in one day; secondly, because it was to be apprehended, that if we left open one of the roads through these hills the enemy might have passed to the southward while we were going to the northward, and then the action would have been delayed, or probably avoided. Colonel Stevenson and I were never more than twelve miles distant from each other, and when I moved forward to the action of the 23d, we were not much more than eight miles.”—*Letter to Lieut.-Col. Munro, 1st Nov. Wellington Despatches.*

The loss of the Marhattas could never be correctly ascertained; but it was computed, that they left two thousand dead* upon the field, and that their wounded exceeded thrice that number. Several standards,† and nearly the whole of their artillery fell into the hands of the conquerors; and when they halted twelve miles from the scene of their defeat, they had no cannon, and scarcely any ammunition, the tumbrils having been deserted or blown up. On the first intelligence that Colonel Stevenson (who reached the field of battle next morning) was advancing in force, the routed divisions fled precipitately down the Ghauts, and easily evaded a pursuit, which the feebleness of the victors, and their own immense superiority in cavalry, rendered unavailing.

Among the many distinguished or promising officers who fell in this brilliant but sanguinary action, Colonel Maxwell of the 19th dragoons was particularly regretted. He had shown excellent judgment in the command of the cavalry, throughout a very doubtful day—and in the last charge,

* There was a curious circumstance attendant on the battle of Assye. The birds of prey, common in the country, collected on the field after the action, "taking possession of the inheritance left them by their kindest benefactor, man." Among the number, several adjutants were seen, a bird uncommon in the Marhatta country, and seldom met with but at Calcutta, or in the immediate vicinity of the Hooghly. The instinctive faculty which could direct a bird to find out a field of battle, in an incredibly short time, and from a considerable distance, appears almost beyond belief. An occurrence nearly similar is mentioned by Batty (*Campaign in the Western Pyrenees*)—and the Pyrenean vulture appears to have discriminating powers in discovering "a foughten field" fully equal to those of the Indian adjutant.

† "We have taken seven stand of colours, and the enemy lost all their ammunition, although the tumbrils having blown up, some during the action and others during the succeeding night, we have got nothing but the shot. The ordnance is very fine; but I have destroyed the iron guns, and shall put the brass guns in a place of security."—*Wellesley Despatches*.

Return of ordnance taken from the enemy, 23d Sept. 1803 :—

Brass Howitzers, various calibres .	7
— Guns, ditto	69
Iron ditto	22
Total	93

died gloriously, sword in hand, at the head of his gallant regiment.

The death of an officer of inferior rank, Captain Mackay, of the 4th native cavalry, occasioned a very general sympathy; and as the detail is highly honourable to Major-General Wellesley, and in a very striking light, "points the moral" of his earlier character, we shall, with a prefatory explanation, give it in the words of Colonel Welsh.

Captain Mackay was on the staff, his charge a commissariate one, and consequently he was neither expected nor permitted to engage in regimental duty. Popular with his own corps, "brave to a fault," kind to his inferiors, and unassuming with his equals, he made a great military mistake, in exhibiting a proud and unbending spirit to those whose superior rank commanded from him a professional deference. It would appear that with Major-General Wellesley he was no favourite; and indeed, though possessing every redeeming quality besides, that one unfortunate failing could not but occasion annoyances to those in command, and entail still more frequent humiliations on himself.

"On the eve of the battle, Mackay wrote to Captain Barclay, the Adjutant-General, requesting the General's permission to join his corps upon the march and in action. To this request he got a positive refusal, and was told he could not be spared from his own department, he being in charge of the public cattle of the army. He offered to resign; and was told he could not be spared at that moment. On which he wrote, that "whenever he should find his corps going into action, he would, at all hazards, join it; that he knew he should thereby forfeit his commission, but he trusted, if he did lose it, it would be with honour." On the receipt of this hasty and ill-advised letter, the General is said to have exclaimed, "What can we do with such a fellow, Barclay? I believe we must e'en let him go;"—and go he certainly did, heading the charge of his own regiment, and in line with the leading squadron of the

noble veteran 19th dragoons; and he fell, man and horse; close to one of the enemy's guns, pierced through by several grape shot. When in the very heat of the action, news was brought to the General that Captain Mackay was killed, his countenance changed, and a tear which fell upon his cheek, was nature's involuntary homage to the memory of a kindred spirit." *

When the last of the enemy had disappeared, such of the cavalry as were fit for duty, were sent back to Nulliah by moonlight, to bring up the camp equipage and baggage. This partial detachment, with the immense proportion of the little army, rendered in the action *hors de combat*, reduced Major-General Wellesley's force to a mere handful; and the field of Assye, from which fifty thousand combatants had been driven at sun-set, was held during the succeeding night, by a force not exceeding fourteen hundred men!

* Colonel Welsh's Military Reminiscences.



CHAPTER IX.

FRENCH ESTABLISHMENT ON THE JUMNA—MILITARY PREPARATIONS—LORD LAKE'S CAMPAIGN—OPERATIONS IN CUTTACK AND GUJERAT—WAR CONTINUED IN THE DECCAN—LETTER TO MAJOR SHAWE—DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY GENERAL WELLESLEY—TREATMENT OF BRINJARRIES—COLONEL STEVENSON DETACHED—HIS INSTRUCTIONS—FALL OF BUEHAMPOOR AND ASSEERGHUR—GENERAL WELLESLEY'S POSITION—MARCHES AGAINST THE RAJAH OF BEHAR.

WHILE these important events were being transacted in the Deccan, we shall notice briefly the operations simultaneously carried on by General Lake, and the other officers who commanded separate corps. A leading principle in British policy, had ever been to interrupt, when possible, French connexions with the native princes, and thus prevent a European influence in their sirdahs, which could lead to nothing but dangerous results. No wonder then that the Presidencies were alarmed, when a sort of military state was created under Scindiah's patronage on the banks of the Jumna. Perron, a French officer in the service of that chieftain, had succeeded De Boigne in the command of the auxiliary troops, which were under the directions of efficient officers of his own country, and disposed equally to second the hostile views of the Marhatta confederacy, or forward those of Napoleon for the subversion of the

British power in the East. "For the maintenance of this subsidiary force, he had obtained a grant of a rich and extensive territory, yielding 1,700,000*l.* a-year of revenue, extending from the banks of the Jumna towards those of the Indus, through the Punjaub, and comprising Agra, Delhi, and a large portion of Doab, or the alluvial plain between the Jumna and the Ganges. It was not the least important circumstance in this military establishment, that it gave M. Perron the entire command of the person of the unfortunate Shah Aulum, the degraded heir of the throne of Delhi; and promised at no distant period to put the French Emperor in possession of the rights of the house of Timour over the Indian Peninsula."

To crush this dangerous power, obtain possession of Delhi and Agra, and form alliances in the north of India with the rajpoots, were the grand objects at which the Marquess Wellesley aimed. An extended plan of operations was necessary to effect these ends; and when Major-General Wellesley marched against Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, a subsidiary movement, under Colonel Campbell, was directed against Cuttack and Jaggernaut, while General, afterwards Lord Lake, struck at the very centre of Scindiah's power, and in a short and brilliant campaign annihilated the immense military resources of the ambitious slipper-bearer,* and checked the influence of France, which

* The family of this chief was exceedingly obscure. Scindiah's father had been a husbandman, and his rise was singularly accidental. When a private soldier in the guard, he had been left by his master at the outer door of the Zenana in charge of the Peshwah's slippers. Scindiah was discovered on the return of the Rajah fast asleep, but with the slippers clasped closely to his bosom. This trait of fidelity in the discharge of a very humble duty, attracted the attention of the monarch, and secured his ultimate advancement.

"When Scindiah was at the head of sixteen regular battalions, a hundred thousand horse, and two hundred pieces of cannon, he placed himself at the court of the Peishwah, below all the hereditary nobles of the state, declined to sit down in their presence, and untying a bundle of slippers, said, 'This is my occupation: it was my father's.'"—*Alison's History of Europe* vol. vii. p. 146.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, OF THE HINDOOSTAN PROVINCES IN THE EAST INDIES.



had made extensive progress already, and that too, in the very heart of Hindustan.

On the failure of the negotiation with Scindiah, the departure of the British Resident from Poonah was the signal for Lord Lake's advance. On the 7th of August he quitted Cawnpore, and on the 28th came in front of Perron's army, which he found drawn up in a very strong position, on heights which covered the strong fortress of Allighur. The offer of neutrality made by the French General was rejected, and his forces were attacked and defeated. Allighur was next assailed, and carried most gallantly by storm, after "a bloody struggle, an hour in duration."

Lord Lake continued his movement upon Delhi; Monsieur Perron, by a special negotiation, having arranged to quit the Marhatta service, and return with his enormous fortune to France. His successor in the command, M. Louis Bourguien, entertained a strong animosity to the English, which he evinced by at once assuming a hostile attitude; and advancing in great strength, he took up a commanding position to protect the city of Delhi,* with twenty thousand well-disciplined troops, and upwards of one hundred pieces of cannon. On the 11th the advanced wing of the British army, after a distressing march of eighteen miles, came up with Scindiah's auxiliaries. With numbers greatly inferior, the enemy were instantly attacked, and driven from their guns and position, leaving to the victors sixty-eight pieces of artillery, thirty-seven tumbrils, and eleven standards; and to crown all, Delhi was next day taken possession of without resistance.

The French general and his principal officers, soon after surrendered themselves to the British; and the troops, now left without leaders, retired towards Agra, followed closely by Lake and his victorious army.

* The strength and extent of the defences may be imagined from the works being armed with one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, garrisoned by four thousand men, and surrounded by a wet ditch "large enough to float a seventy-four."—*Lake's Despatches.*

When overtaken, they were posted in very strong ground covering the southern approach of the city. An attack was promptly made, and it succeeded. The subsidiaries were driven from their ground—the city carried by assault—and the citadel reduced in a few days; thus rendering to the conquerors “the last stronghold, and the great arsenal of the enemy.” In Agra, enormous quantities of military stores were found, one hundred and sixty pieces of brass and iron cannon,* and nearly 300,000*l.* in specie, with other property of immense value.

This stream of success astounded the northern princes, and led to their submission. The secession of the native powers, and the defeat of his best troops, justly alarmed Scindiah, and induced him to move his best infantry from the Deccan; and having strengthened the remnants of the armies of Delhi and Agra with fourteen battalions, and a numerous park of guns, he presented, once more, a very formidable attitude. Lake, leaving his artillery and baggage, pressed forward with his light troops and cavalry, and by an extraordinary night march of forty miles, succeeded in coming up with the enemy at noon on the 1st of November. They numbered fully sixteen thousand fighting men, with seventy pieces of cannon, and were posted advantageously, with their right resting on a rivulet, and their left on the village of Laswarree.

* Some of the cannon taken from the enemy were of enormous size, and curious composition. At Delhi, on the 11th of September, of the guns captured, “thirteen of the 4-pounders had iron cylinders (or bores) over which it would seem the metal had been run in casting the piece; for the adherence was so close, that no slit or chasm appeared, and nothing but the different colours of the two metals discovered the junction. The iron cylinder (or bore) was composed of four longitudinal pieces of hammered iron, remarkably close and neatly fitted throughout.”—*Official Returns by Lieut.-Col. Horsford.*

At Agra, on the 22d of October, the “great gun,” which fell into the hands of the victors, was thus described. “It was composed of many metals, including all the precious ones. The ball measured 22 inches; and such a one, if of cast iron, would weigh nearly 1,500*lbs.*” (*Ibid.*) A 72-pounder was also named in the return, and described to be composed of a similar mixture of metals.

Anxious to prevent his enemy from escaping, Lake attacked them with his cavalry, his infantry having not yet gotten up. The charge was brilliantly executed—the line in several places cut through, and many guns captured. But unable to reply to a furious cannonade, and sustain a withering discharge of musketry, Lake was obliged to retire the cavalry out of fire, and abandon the captured guns.

The enemy having offered to give up their cannon on certain terms, an hour was allowed for the purpose of effecting it, during which time, Lake's infantry reached the battle ground. At the expiration of the hour, the British General, with his small army formed in two columns, moved forward a second time to the attack. The 76th regiment headed the leading column—the second, moving in support of the first, was directed against the enemy's left flank, and the village of Laswarree. Lake in person headed the 76th; and though a crushing fire destroyed a third of the column when advancing, it pressed undauntedly forward, and stormed the batteries by a rush.* At this critical moment, the 29th British light dragoons charged and overthrew the Marhatta horse, cleared the flanks of the column, and enabled the regiments to deploy. The enemy's retreat commenced regularly at first, but soon changed to a rout, from the frequent charges of the British and native cavalry—the obstinacy of the Marhatta defence only increasing the bloodshed of the day. Multitudes were cut down; two thousand made prisoners; forty-four stand of colours, and the whole of the guns, ammunition, and baggage, abandoned with the field to the victors.

This brilliant victory annihilated Scindiah's influence in the north of India, and prostrated the French power on the Jumna, which had risen with a rapidity only equalled by the suddenness of its overthrow.

* "So admirable was their steadiness, that a staff officer observed, at the moment when they approached the enemy's fire, 'that an arrow discharged at one end of the line, would go through half the feathers of the regiment.'"

In Cuttack, the British operations were ably executed. Colonel Harcourt* overcame every resistance; possessed himself of Jaggernaut and Cuttack; and added that fine province, lying on the sea-coast and connecting the presidencies of Bengal and Madras, to the Indian dominions of the Company.

In the Gujerat, the Bombay army was equally successful. With a detached corps, Colonel Woodington reduced the town and fort of Baroach, and afterwards the district of Champaneer, with the strong hill fort of Powanghen. These military movements were carried on with great ability and spirit; and his last possession in the Gujerat, yielding an annual revenue estimated at eleven lacs of rupees, was wrested from Scindiah, and annexed to the British government.

While these important events were progressing in the other provinces of Hindustan, the victory of Assye was being followed up by General Wellesley with his customary activity. Colonel Stevenson was detached to harass the ruins of Scindiah's army, and afterwards reduce the fortresses of Burhampoor and Asseerghur. The General himself was prevented moving from the neighbourhood of his victory, as the greatest difficulty was experienced in obtaining means of transport for his wounded; and no consideration could induce him to "leave his brave fellows exposed in an open town." While, to use his own phrase, "tied by the heels," from being obliged to send all his doolies to the fort of Adjunttee with the wounded, every day brought intelligence, which proved how decisive the defeat at Assye had been. In his official letters, dated from the camp, he makes frequent allusions to the extent of Scindiah's losses; and in one—which is extracted—private concerns are united with details connected with public duty, and evince that the kindlier feelings of friendship in

* Colonel Campbell was obliged by dangerous illness to retire from the command, and was succeeded by Colonel Harcourt.

the conqueror of Assye were not forgotten, even under the excitement of a recent and decisive victory. The letter is addressed to Major Shawe, and dated 28th September, 1803:—

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I have received a letter from Mr. Thomas Pakenham, a writer in the Bengal establishment, respecting whom I am particularly interested. He is the son of Admiral Pakenham, a very old friend of Lord Wellesley and of me. I believe him to be very young and inexperienced; I therefore most anxiously recommend him to your care and attention. I have also given him a letter of recommendation to my friend Mr. Ross, whom I have requested to have an eye upon his conduct, and above all things, to prevent him from keeping bad company.

“ Should the college last, of course he will attend that institution; if not, I have desired him to acquire a knowledge of the country languages. I request you to urge him particularly upon this point, and do not allow him to be idle. Desire him to show you the letter which I have written to him.

“ Do not allow him to run in debt; if he should want money, I have desired him to apply to David Ross or you. Pray supply his wants, if he should require it, and apply to David Ross for any sums you may give him.

“ I have nothing new to tell you. The destruction of the enemy's army was almost complete. It is now said that they had in their camp one hundred and twenty-eight guns; of which number a few were at Scindiah's quarters, which being in the cavalry camp were not attacked. These few were taken off: they have lost the remainder, amounting to one hundred and twenty. Of these we have got about one hundred. The remainder are thrown into nullahs, and scattered along the road between this place and Adjunttee; and they will be destroyed by Colonel Stevenson on his march in pursuit of the enemy.

" Their cavalry are dispersed in different directions, plundering each other and their own bazaar. There were not more than two hundred of their infantry collected in their camp below the ghauts yesterday morning, when they marched towards Burhampoor.

" It is said that they lost one thousand two hundred men killed; the wounded and dying are scattered throughout the country in all directions.

" I give you the hircarra reports. God knows whether they are true, but I believe they are.

" The Nizam's servants are behaving ill, and I cannot get a place of security for my wounded soldiers. This delays my advance; but Colonel Stevenson has gone after the enemy, and will push them with activity as far as possible.

" Believe me, &c.

" Major Shawe."

" ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

Is it not astonishing, that after a success so very splendid as that of Assye, so many obstacles should interpose to prevent General Wellesley from reaping the advantages which as certain results, might have been expected to attend this brilliant conquest? No cooperation could be obtained from the ally whose power that victory had consolidated.* By the servants of the Nizam the most unfriendly feelings were evinced—the wounded were rejected from their fortresses—the country afforded no supplies—and every possible difficulty was thrown in the way of procuring any from a distance. But their disaffection was still more unequivocally exhibited—and in a letter to Major Kirkpatrick, on the 28th of September, the General observes:—

* " It is very obvious that his Highness the Soubah is not aware of the benefit which he derives from his alliance with the British Government. In fact his government could not stand, and would not have stood one day, without the powerful support which it has received.

* * * * *

" I must endeavour to work through the war without the assistance of his magazines."—*Wellington Despatches.*

"Since I wrote to you yesterday, complaining of the conduct of the Soubahdar's servants, another instance of their hostility has been communicated to me. The Killadar or Amildar of Budnapoor, fired upon a detachment of British troops under Captain Baynes, on his march to join me with a convoy.

"I attribute these repeated instances of hostility to a disaffection to the cause, and to our forbearance. But they certainly require the notice of the Soubahdar's government; and if they are continued, I shall be reduced to the necessity of treating the country as an enemy's, or of withdrawing from it altogether."*

It may, therefore, be easily imagined, what serious inconvenience would be felt, in maintaining an army in a country altogether destitute of supplies, and that hourly, fresh difficulties should present themselves, which General Wellesley, by the greatest personal exertions, was scarcely enabled to overcome. The fidelity, however, with which his engagements were discharged, and a liberality wisely exercised, in remunerating losses accidentally sustained, induced brinjarries to flock to the British bazaars, and even to convey thither stores actually intended for the confederates. In writing from the camp on the 3d of October, the General says,—"I am tolerably supplied, although in a desert in which the enemy have been so long. Some of Ragojee Bhoonslah's brinjarries have joined me, to the number of fifteen hundred bullocks. One thousand more will be in to-morrow, and I have given cowle to six thousand who have promised to come in."† In his journal, dated the 5th of October, General Nicholls makes the following observations—"Within these two days we have been joined by another convoy of 2000 or 3000 bullocks loaded with grain, which supply was not expected or known of. They are a brinjarry tribe, who say they collected the grain to the eastward and southward, and

* Wellington Despatches.

† Ibid.

were looking out for one of the armies, where they would be sure of a market: it is most likely that they were going to Scindiah, or the Rajah of Berar, as they rarely put themselves to much trouble on speculation. The cutwahl, or head native civil magistrate in camp, heard of their approach when at a distance, and by his dexterity induced them to come to this army—a step which it might not have been convenient or politic, anticipating its effects on other brinjarry communities, to have forced them to take.

“General Wellesley has always made it a point to encourage these people, by promises, kindnesses, presents—indeed, by every kind of liberality of which he possesses the means—to attend our camp, and collect grain for the army. He advances them money; takes their grain when not immediately wanted; gets the duties on its transport remitted; procures permits to collect it in our allies’ territory; gives or orders escorts; provides guards in camp, or whenever required; whenever they meet extraordinary losses, he balances them by the price; and not seldom has he ordered two or three rupees a-head as a reward for each bullock brought. In the case above-mentioned, he was generous to the brinjarries, who cannot well be considered as the subjects of any particular prince who could revenge himself upon them. To the cutwaid he gave a heavy pair of gold bangles, of which he considerably enhanced the value, by putting them on his wrists with his own hands. Marks of favour are highly esteemed by inferiors in all countries, but in none more than in India. This simple attention of General Wellesley has, no doubt, raised the cutwaid very much in his little city, the bazaar; which his valour at Assye, and his late successful negotiation, will make him feel the importance and advantage of, and give him energy to increase the former, and credit to improve the latter.” *

* Nicholl’s Journal.

The position in which General Wellesley was placed, embarrassed him no little in deciding what future movements should be adopted. In a despatch, dated the 8th of October, he describes in clear but brief terms the reasons which prevented him from marching northward, and obliged him to entrust to Colonel Stevenson the reduction of the fort of Burhampoor.

“Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, after making two marches to the westward along the Taptee, have turned to the southward, and, it is said, intend to pass the Casserbarry Ghaut. They have with them the greatest part of their horse, some infantry, and some guns, which they got out of Burhampoor. They have sent into that place the remains of the Campoos.*

“It is possible that this movement may be intended to draw my attention away from Burhampoor and Asseerghur; and they may return to the northward upon finding that I do not follow them. On the other hand, these things called allied governments are in such a state of deplorable weakness, they depend so entirely on us for the defence of their own territories, and their power is so feeble over their own servants, who have so much connexion with and even dependence on the enemy, that I have not means to move forward at once upon Asseerghur with my whole force, although I know that if I could take that step with safety, it would put an end to the war.

“But not one of the Soubah's forts is sufficiently garrisoned. He has not a soldier in the country, excepting those belonging to the Company; and his killedars and amildars would readily pay the money they may have, just to be allowed to sit quietly in their forts and towns. As for the Peshwah, he has possession of his palace at Poonah, and nothing more; and he spends the little money he receives from the Brahmins, or upon women, rather than give any to his troops, or even to his menial servants.

* Regiments of infantry.

“The consequence, then, of my proceeding to the northward with my whole force might be, that the enemy would get possession, or levy contributions upon some important place belonging to Nizam; or they might move down upon Poonah itself. They would certainly stop our supplies, and the consequence of such a movement might thus be fatal to us. In this manner does the radical weakness of these governments operate against us.

“I have therefore determined to return to the southward, and to send Colonel Stevenson to Burhampoor.”*

In accordance with these opinions, General Wellesley detached the Colonel on this service, with a caution that he should avoid a general action should the enemy prove strong in artillery, while his attention was particularly directed to beating any infantry he might find at Burhampoor, and levying a contribution on the place. He was farther desired to reconnoitre Asseerghur, and, should success seem probable, besiege that place; but should its fall appear doubtful, to move to the right, invest Gawilghur, and then lay Nagpoor under contribution. With such general instructions, Colonel Stevenson was to use his best exertions, to bring about a defection of the European officers and native soldiers enrolled in Scindiah's service; and he was to convey to them copies of a proclamation, offering them in that case a liberal provision from the British government.

On the 8th, General Wellesley quitted the camp at Adjunttee, and marched in the direction of Aurungabad; and on the 10th, moved on to Binkenholey. On the 11th, head quarters were at Phoolmurry, sixteen miles north of Aurungabad. There, the intelligence he received determined him to move down the Ghaut; and in consequence, he addressed the following letter to Colonel Stevenson:—

* Wellington Despatches.

"Camp at Phoolmurry, Oct. 12th, 1803.

"MY DEAR COLONEL,

"I have reason to believe that the enemy have not come through the Ghaut; and it is possible that they will now return to attack you with all the force they can bring.

"Your first object will of course be to beat the Campoos, before the cavalry under Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar can join; or to drive them across the Taptee, and to such a distance, as that they cannot come back so quickly as to join with the cavalry in an attack upon you before I can reinforce you.

"If, however, they should be able to join you before you can attack the Campoos, you must decide what line you will adopt.

"There are three lines of operation to be adopted: to attack the enemy, to stand his attack, or to draw off towards me.

"In respect to the first, it is impossible to say what quantity of cannon they may have collected at Burham-poor; or what their real force may now be. I recommend that you should adopt this with caution, and only in case of necessity.

"In respect to the second, it may possibly be worse than the first; as, unless you entrench your position, which I should recommend, if you adopt this line, your inferiority of cannon will tell against you still more than it would in the case of your attacking the enemy.

"In regard to the third, it might be attended with risk, and even loss, excepting in this case. When I shall descend the Ghaut, which I shall on the 4th, after leaving this, you might make two marches towards me, which would bring us within one march of each other. Till they are prepared for their attack, which, as they are very slow,* will take some time, they will not stay nearer to you

* "The camp, on the resources of which an army of this kind must subsist, must be rather heavy; besides, there are great personages in it. They must have tents, elephants, and other sewary, and must have with them a

than at the distance of two marches; and supposing them to be able to make two in one day, I shall have joined you before they can do you any mischief.

“Supposing that you determine to have a brush with them, I recommend what follows to your consideration. Do not attack their position, because they always take up such as are confoundedly strong and difficult of access, for which the banks of the numerous rivers and nullahs afford them every facility. Do not remain in your own position, however strong it may be, or however well you may have entrenched it; but when you shall hear that they are on their march to attack you, secure your baggage, and move out of your camp. You will find them in the common disorder of march; they will not have time to form, which, being but half-disciplined troops, is necessary for them. At all events, you will have the advantage of making the attack on ground which they will not have chosen for the battle; a part of their troops only will be engaged; and it is possible that you will gain an easy victory. Indeed, according to this mode, you might choose the field of battle yourself some days before, and might meet them upon that very ground.”*

Colonel Stevenson's operations were attended with complete success, and the objects at which General Wellesley aimed, fully accomplished. “On the 16th of October, the Colonel took possession of Burhampoor without

sufficient body of troops to guard their persons. The number of cavalry retained in such a camp, must consequently be very large.

“Large bodies move slowly, and it is not difficult to gain intelligence of their motions. A few rapid and well-contrived movements, made not directly upon them, but with a view to prevent the execution of any favourite design, or its mischievous consequences, soon bring them to their bearings; they stop, look about them, begin to feel restless, and are obliged to go off.”—*Gen. Wellesley to Lieut.-Col. Munro, 1st Oct. 1803.*

* This remark curiously coincides with a statement generally made—that the Duke while on a tour of inspection in Belgium, after a careful examination of the position at Waterloo, observed at the time, “that should he ever be obliged to fight a battle to protect Brussels, that would be the ground on which he would take his stand.”

opposition; marched to Asseerghur on the 17th; took possession of the Pettah on the 18th; opened a battery against the fort on the 20th; and obtained possession of it on the morning of the 21st."*

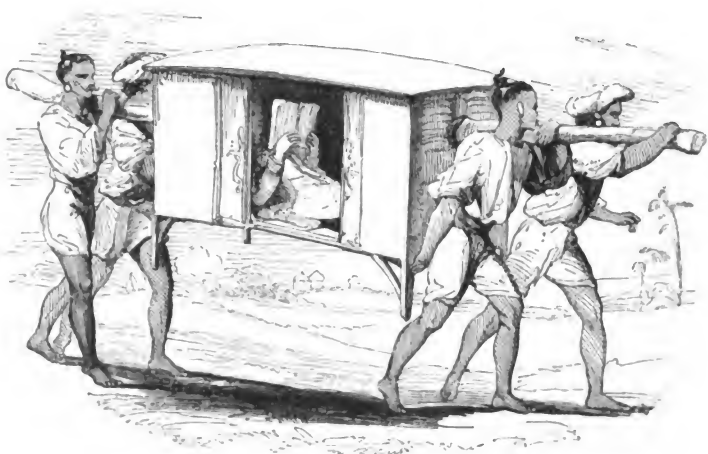
And yet it was a strange position in which General Wellesley found himself, one of great embarrassment, and involving a serious responsibility. Every step he took required the deepest consideration—his operations were defensive or aggressive, as circumstances varied; and, while with one wing of his little army he reduced the strongholds of the enemy, he was obliged, with the other, to secure an extensive frontier, penetrable on every point, and with no resisting means beside his own, on which for a moment he dare place dependence. In writing officially to Major Shawe, he thus describes his singular position:—"Since the battle of Assye, I have been like a man who fights with one hand and defends himself with the other. With Colonel Stevenson's corps I have acted offensively, and have taken Asseerghur; and with my own, I have covered his operations, and defended the territories of the Nizam and the Peshwah. In doing this, I have made some terrible marches, but I have been remarkably fortunate; first, in stopping the enemy when they intended to press to the southward, through the Casserbury Ghaut; and afterwards, by a rapid march to the northward, in stopping Scindiah, when he was moving to interrupt Colonel Stevenson's operations against Asseerghur; in which he would otherwise have undoubtedly succeeded."*

Convinced, however, from the best sources through which he gleaned his information, that a great desertion had taken place in Scindiah's cavalry, and that this, added to the ruin of his infantry at Assye, would prevent any dangerous movement by that chief; watched closely as he was by Colonel Stevenson's division, General Wellesley found himself at last authorized in recommencing active operations;

* Wellington Despatches.

and accordingly he turned his attention to the Rajah of Berar, who had moved to the southward on a predatory expedition. On the 25th of October,—for with Wellesley, to plan and to execute were simultaneous,—he broke up his camp.—“The *générale* was beaten at half-past four, the assembly at half-past five, and the march immediately commenced.”*

* Journal of Major-General Nicholls.



CHAPTER X.

APPEARANCE OF AN INDIAN ARMY—ORDER OF MARCH—MOVEMENTS OF THE
RAJAH OF BERAR—HE ATTACKS A CONVOY AND IS REPULSED—SCINDIAH
DESPATCHES A VAKEEL TO THE BRITISH CAMP—HIS RECEPTION—SUS-
PENSION OF HOSTILITIES AGREED TO—REASONS—COLONEL STEVENSON—
WELLESLEY MARCHES AGAINST SCINDIAH—BATTLE OF ARGAM—ANECDOTE.

NOTHING can be more picturesque than a military movement on an extended scale, over a country possessing those rich and striking features for which India is remarkable. The *coup d'œil* is grand and scenic—as lost in jungle or ravine, and again displayed in glorious sunshine,

“Troop after troop are disappearing,
Troop after troop their banners rearing,”

until the whole of “battle’s magnificent array” covers some mighty plain with crowds of men and animals which in numbers appear interminable.* The march of a European army, imposing as it is, conveys but a faint idea of the gorgeous effect an oriental one produces. A flood of crimson blends with the varied colouring of native costume, and the highland tartan is contrasted with the flowered caftans of the horsemen of Mysore. All is on a scale of

* “When General Harris advanced against Seringapatam in 1799, his army was composed of 35,000 fighting men and 120,000 attendants; and when the Marquess of Hastings in 1817 commenced the Marhatta war, his fighting force amounted to 110,000 men—his camp followers to 500,000!”
—*Malte Brun*, vol. iii. p. 328.

magnificence. The field equipage, the park,* the commissariate, appear to a European eye enormous—while animals without number, from the stately elephant to the graceful Arab, add to the splendid effect this mighty pageant exhibits.

The order of march the army of the Deccan adopted, is thus described by Major-General Nicholls with graphic accuracy :—

“ A body of Mysore horse, about four hundred, led the columns. At some distance, the advanced guard was followed by the cavalry, with the new infantry pickets marching in their rear. The line of infantry followed, and after them the park, store, and provision carts succeeded. The guns of the allies closed the line of carriages; the ammunition and park bullocks followed them, with the rear-guard, consisting of the old pickets. A squadron of cavalry moved on the reverse flank, and another body of four hundred Mysoreans closed the line of march. Detachments of pioneers attended the leading divisions of the cavalry, advanced guard, the line, and the park. Guides were sent every morning before the assembly beat to the heads of the cavalry advanced and rear-guard. The baggage (when practicable) was kept on the reverse flank entirely. The irregular horse of the allies marched on either flank, as most agreeable to the wishes of their leaders.

“ Great care was taken to keep the line of march free from embarrassment. The brigadier of cavalry was ordered

* “ The iron 12-pounders are drawn by forty-four bullocks, nine sets formed abreast, and four pair of leaders; four abreast, they take up very little more room than the breadth of the carriage. To each gun there is a spare bullock; to the large ones, more. To each pair of iron 12-pounders an elephant is attached, which assists them in their draught in sandy, miry, steep, or otherwise difficult parts of the roads. The noble sagacity of these animals is wonderful; their tractability no less so; they follow the first gun, applying their aid without direction when well trained to it, when necessary, and then falling back on one side until the other has passed, when they follow in their place; they will, if required, chastise the bullocks with their trunks when they do not pull heartily.”—*Nicholl's Journal*.

to halt whenever he exceeded the distance of three quarters of a mile in front of the infantry ; and the long roll for halting was beaten by any corps to whom an accidental stoppage occasioned a break of one hundred yards. The roll was repeated from front to rear by every corps, until the squadron or battalion was ready to move again, when the taps passed along the line, and the whole moved forward."*

Having received authentic information touching the movements of the Rajah of Berar, and clearly ascertained that he had traversed the hill country that forms the boundary of Candeish, on his route to the banks of the Godavery, General Wellesley, on the 25th, ascended the Adjunttee Ghaut, and marching southward, passed Aurungabad on the 29th. In his despatch of the second of November, from the camp at Cheesekair, he details his own operations, and a very gallant affair which occurred between the escort of a convoy, and a strong corps of cavalry by whom it was attacked.

" The Rajah had advanced gradually to the eastward, and was at Luckagaum, about twenty miles north from Puttun, when I arrived at Aurungabad ; and between this night and the night of the 31st, during the whole of which time I was in his neighbourhood, he moved his camp five times.

" On the 31st, he detached a body consisting of 5000 horse to endeavour to intercept a convoy consisting of 14,000 bullocks, which was going forward to join the troops on the frontier. This convoy was protected by three companies of the 2d battalion of 3d Madras native infantry, with two three-pounders under Captain Baynes ; which detachment, with 400 Mysore horse, has for some time been employed in conveying grain from the districts south of the Godavery to my camp, and by a company from the subsidiary force, and two companies from the corps serving at Hyderabad, under the command of Captain Seton.

" They had marched from the Godavery on the morning of the 31st, and reached Umber, where they were attacked :

* Nicholls' Journal.

they succeeded in beating off the enemy, and in securing the convoy, which arrived in safety in my camp yesterday, notwithstanding the great superiority of numbers by which they were attacked.

“I have the honour to enclose copies of the reports of this action, which I have received from Captain Baynes; upon which I have to observe, that it affords another instance of what can be done by disciplined infantry, determined to do their duty, against very superior numbers of cavalry.

“I beg leave also to take this opportunity to draw your Lordship's notice to the Mysore cavalry under Bisnapah Pundit. This corps, which consists of 2000 men, have performed all the light troop duties of this division of the army, since I was detached from the Toombuddra, in the month of March last. They have performed these duties with the utmost cheerfulness, and a zeal which I have never before witnessed in troops of this description. They have frequently been engaged with the enemy's light troops, have conducted themselves well, and have lost many men and horses.

“To the credit of the government of Mysore, I mention that they are paid as regularly as the British troops; and the consequence is, that it is possible to keep them in order and from plundering the country. It is to their example that I attribute the conduct of the Marhatta troops serving with this division of the army, and of which I have no reason to complain.

“The Rajah of Berar has moved to the eastward, and I think he is going to his own territories. I have no doubt that he would have been obliged to do so, even without my presence in these districts, if any one step had been taken by the government for their protection, or, I might add, if there existed any government in the country. It is now obvious, that horse alone cannot make any impression on a country; and if there had been only a few peons in the villages, as has been frequently recommended to the

government of Hyderabad by the Resident, the Rajah must have lost the whole of his baggage, in the confused and precipitate flight which he has made since I have been in this neighbourhood."

The admirable judgment which Major-General Wellesley evinced in the vigorous but cautious system of warfare he adopted, produced the results he had anticipated. The immense numerical forces of the Marhatta chieftains became daily more difficult to keep together, when forced back upon their own frontiers, and obliged to seek those supplies at home, that hitherto they had acquired by marauding on their neighbours. After some weeks marching and counter-marching, Scindiah, disgusted with a war in which no plunder was to be obtained, and of which the burden, as well as danger, fell entirely on his own dominions, made proposals for peace, and despatched a vakeel to General Wellesley. On his arrival, on the 8th of November, in the vicinity of the British camp, the envoy was received with suitable respect,* and a scene of oriental formality ensued, which Lieutenant-Colonel Welsh notices in his *Reminiscences*.

" Having passed at a canter to the Marhatta lines on our left, and there meeting the Vakeel, who with his friends had dismounted to receive the General, we all alighted, when a *gullehmillow*, or hugging scene, commenced among the great folks, which lasted some minutes; after which the ambassador and General Wellesley again mounted, followed by the rest, and the cavalcade returned by torch-light to head quarters, where the band of his Majesty's 78th regiment and a company were drawn up, who saluted

* "The Vakeel, Eswont Row Goreporee, was a man of considerable importance, and was dignified with the Persian title of *Ameer ul Oomrah*, literally Lord of Lords. He was richly dressed and well mounted, and had an elephant, two camels, and many led horses, &c., and an escort of ninety of his master's best cavalry. Although we had every reason to conclude his mission was urgent, yet that superstition I before mentioned here interfered, and the 7th being deemed an unlucky day, he was not introduced to the General."
—*Military Reminiscences*.

the Vakeel as he dismounted. The General's tent, a large square single-poled one of about thirty feet, although half the officers had retired, could hardly contain the genteel crowd which remained. Taking a particular interest in the scene, I contrived to get close to the General's chair. He first handed the Vakeel in, and seated him on his right hand, and Gocklah, our head ally, on his left, and so on with the rest, according to their rank. A silver salver with betel was then brought in, which the General distributed to all the seven natives on his right and left entitled to such a compliment. He then gave them rich dresses and shawls, and lastly, presented the Vakeel in particular with two superb jewels, and a rich gold chain, which were immediately fastened round his turban, and several more beautiful shawls and dresses were added to that donation; during which time the band of the 78th played 'God save the King.' The great men conversed on common topics, till the last present, when the Vakeel told General Wellesley, in very good Hindoostanee, that 'the Maharajah, his master, wished for nothing so ardently as his friendship and amity;' and rising to take leave, was conducted to the door by the General. As a great concourse had assembled at the entrance, it was with difficulty the guard could make way for a very large elephant and beautiful horse to be brought up, and presented to the Vakeel, who, mounted on a superb white charger, most richly caparisoned, galloped off in great style, followed by his presents and escort;—and thus ended the visit."

The mission of Scindiah's vakeel, in consequence of his not being properly accredited by his master, was protracted from the 8th to the 22d of November; and then terminated in an armistice, from which the Rajah of Berar was excluded. Whatever objects the Marhatta chief might have had in view by obtaining a cessation of hostilities, it was decidedly politic in General Wellesley to effect it if he could; for thus he would sever the confederacy, and be placed in a position to crush his enemies in detail. He was well aware of the

insincerity of his opponent; and never doubted but that the armistice was designed by Scindiah to serve an end, and that its conditions would be observed or violated just as interest should require. In a despatch to Lieutenant-General Stuart, from the camp at Rajoorah, dated the 23d of November, he thus lucidly explains his motives for adopting a measure not very usually resorted to.

“ I positively refused to suspend hostilities against the Rajah of Berar; and they then proposed that I should agree to suspend them against Scindiah. To this proposal I consented, provided Scindiah would remove to a position in Berar, twenty coss east from Ellichpoor; and that he would take care to keep at the distance of twenty coss from either of the British divisions, while carrying on their operations against the enemies of the British Government. They wished the suspension to extend to Hindustan, to which I would not agree; but I agreed that it should extend to Guzerat. In that quarter, our troops are not to advance beyond Dohud, which is the most advanced place we have got; and they are not to come nearer to Dohud than twenty coss.

“ My motives for agreeing to that suspension of hostilities, are:—First, That I have no power of injuring Scindiah any further. I have taken all he had in the Deccan; and the troops in Guzerat cannot advance upon Ougein, for the reasons stated in a late despatch to the Governor-General, of which I enclosed you a copy. His army now consists of horse only; and in order to distress that, it will be necessary to follow it to a greater distance from our sources of supply, which, considering the distance we are from them already, becomes a matter of some consequence; and from our operations upon the Rajah of Berar, which are most likely to bring about a peace.

“ Secondly, Scindiah's horse might do us much mischief, and might derange our plans against the Rajah of Berar, supposing them to be at liberty to act. The Rajah of Berar's infantry, and a corps of cavalry, both under Manoo

Bappoo, are encamped not far from Gawilghur, the place which Colonel Stevenson has been ordered to attack. It is probable that both he and Scindiah would retire upon Colonel Stevenson's advance; but they would attack Colonel Stevenson during the time that he might be employed at Gawilghur; or possibly, Scindiah would make an irruption into the Soubah's territories, to draw me off to a distance, and Manoo Bappoo would attack Colonel Stevenson. * *

* * * * *

"Fourthly, By leaving the Rajah of Berar out of the arrangement, Scindiah's interests become separate from his; all confidence in Scindiah, if such a thing ever existed, must be lost, and the confederacy becomes, *ipso facto*, dissolved.

"I see no inconvenience that can result from the measure, particularly as I have the power of dissolving the agreement whenever I please.

"I acknowledge that this cessation of hostilities is against all the rules; but in this instance, I think they are rules of which the breach is more likely to be beneficial to the public than the observance."

On forwarding to Colonel Stevenson the conditions attached to the armistice, the Major-General directed that Scindiah, if moving to the eastward of Ellichpoor, should pass unmolested; but should he march westward, the Colonel was authorized to attack him. In the letter of the Deputy-Adjutant-General* which conveyed the order, the following extract shows the kind and manly feelings which the General entertained for the brave old soldier, with whom he had so long and so successfully cooperated.

"The General's principal reason for agreeing to the suspension of hostilities with Scindiah, was, that the siege of Gawilghur might be uninterrupted by him; and the General begs that you will order every preparation to be made for commencing it, immediately on your arrival, and carrying it on with the utmost celerity and activity. But

* Captain Barclay.

as he observes, with much concern, from Captain Johnson's letter, that you are very much weakened and reduced by your late indisposition, he begs that you will not risk your life in the arduous undertaking of the siege of Gawhilghur, if you do not find your strength equal to conducting the operations of it. And if you find yourself too weak for that, he will change situations with you, for the period of the siege, by his joining the subsidiary force, while you take the command of this division."

But, reduced as he was by bodily infirmity, the spirit of the soldier was unbroken, and Colonel Stevenson declined the exchange; and on the 25th of November, the Major-General descended the Rajoora Ghauts to cover the investment of Gawilghur and the intended operations against Berar. Scindiah, who had never designed to carry into effect that condition in the armistice, which obliged him to retire his army forty miles east of Ellichpoor, was encamped at Sersooly, in direct communication with Manoo Bappoo, then commanding the forces of his brother, the Rajah of Berar. On the 28th, Colonel Stevenson judiciously halted at Huttee Andorah, to enable Wellesley to come up; and on the 29th, both corps united at the village of Parterley. These movements were ably planned; and in alluding to them in his despatch, the Major-General observes:—

"Nothing could have been more fortunate than my return to the northward. I just arrived in time. Colonel Stevenson was not delayed for me more than one day; and it is a curious circumstance, that after having been so long separated, and such a distance between us, we should have joined at a moment so critical."

But Scindiah had already moved off; and from the tower of Parterley, a countless mass of horsemen, supposed to be his rear guard, half hidden by a cloud of dust, were seen retiring over a rising ground two miles beyond the village of Sersooly. From the distance they had gained, and the fatigue his troops had undergone, General Wellesley

despaired of overtaking them, and determined to halt and encamp till evening; but the circumstances detailed in his despatch, brought on an action that placed another laurel on his brow, and annihilated Scindiah's power.

The annexed letter, addressed to the Governor-General, contains the official account of this triumph of discipline and courage over numbers:—

“Your Excellency has been informed, that on the 23d I had consented to a suspension of hostilities with the troops of Dowlut Rao Scindiah, in this quarter and Guzerat. The condition on which this agreement depended, viz. ‘That Scindiah should occupy a position twenty coss to the east of Ellichpoor,’ had not been carried into execution; and Scindiah was encamped at Sersooly, about four miles from the camp of Manoo Bappoo, brother to the Rajah of Berar, which was at this place. The army of the former consisted only of cavalry; that of the latter, of cavalry, and a great part, if not the whole, of Ragojee Bhoonslah's regular infantry; and a large proportion of artillery.

“In the course of the 28th, the vakeels from Dowlut Rao Scindiah urgently pressed me not to attack these troops; but I informed them repeatedly, that there was no suspension of arms with Ragojee Bhoonslah; and none with Scindiah, till he should comply with the terms of his agreement; and that I should certainly attack the enemies of the Company wherever I should find them.

“Colonel Stevenson's* division and mine both marched to this place yesterday, the Colonel having with great prudence and propriety halted on the 28th at Huttee Andorah, to enable me to cooperate in the attack of the enemy. We found on our arrival that the armies of both chiefs had

* “This was Colonel Stevenson's last engagement, and closed a long career of honourable and gallant services. He was then so ill that General Wellesley endeavoured to persuade him not to go into action. He did, however, come in a howdah or litter on an elephant, and died a short time afterwards. The General's order on this occasion, while it did justice to an excellent old soldier, did honour to his own heart.”—*Welch's Military Reminiscences*.

decamped; and from a tower in Parterley, I could perceive a confused mass, about two miles beyond Sersooly and Scindiah's old camp, which I concluded to be their armies in march.

"The troops had marched a great distance on a very hot day, and I therefore did not think it proper to pursue them; but shortly after our arrival here, bodies of horse appeared in our front, with which the Mysore cavalry skirmished during a part of the day; and when I went out to push forward the pickets of the infantry to support the Mysore cavalry, and to take up the ground of our encampment, I could perceive distinctly a long line of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, regularly drawn up on the plains of Argaum, immediately in front of that village, and about six miles from this place, at which I intended to encamp.

"Although late in the day, I immediately determined to attack this army. Accordingly I marched on in one column, the British cavalry leading in a direction nearly parallel to that of the enemy's line; covering the rear and left by the Mogul and Mysore cavalry.

"The enemy's infantry and guns were on the left of their centre, with a body of cavalry on their left. Scindiah's army, consisting of one very heavy body of cavalry, was on the right, having on its right a body of pindarries and other light troops. Their line extended above five miles, having in their rear the village and extensive gardens and enclosures of Argaum; and in their front a plain, which, however, was much cut up by watercourses, &c.

"I formed the army in two lines; the infantry in the first, the cavalry in the second, and supporting the right; and the Mogul and Mysore cavalry the left, nearly parallel to that of the enemy; with the right rather advanced in order to press upon the enemy's left. Some little time elapsed before the lines could be formed, owing to a part of the infantry of my division which led the column having got into some confusion. When formed, the whole advanced in the greatest order; the 74th and 78th regiments were

attacked by a large body, (supposed to be Persians,) and all these were destroyed. Scindiah's cavalry charged the 1st battalion, 6th regiment, which was on the left of our line, and were repulsed: and their whole line retired in disorder before our troops, leaving in our hands thirty-eight pieces of cannon and all their ammunition.

"The British cavalry then pursued them for several miles, destroyed great numbers, and took many elephants and camels, and much baggage. The Mogul and Mysore cavalry* also pursued the fugitives, and did them great mischief. Some of the latter are still following them; and I have sent out this morning all of the Mysore, Mogul, and Marhatta cavalry, in order to secure as many advantages from this victory as can be gained, and complete the enemy's confusion.

"For the reason stated in the commencement of this letter, the action did not commence till late in the day; and, unfortunately, sufficient daylight did not remain to do all that I could have wished;† but the cavalry continued their

* "The Mogul cavalry under Salabut Khan, and the Mysore cavalry under Bisanpah Pundit, distinguished themselves. The former took a standard from Scindiah's troops. The Marhatta cavalry were not engaged, as the person who went to them with orders missed his road."—*Wellington Despatches*.

† "We should have had that time, if my native infantry had not been panic-struck, and got into confusion when the cannonade commenced. What do you think of nearly three entire battalions, who behaved so admirably in the battle of Assye, being broken and running off when the cannonade commenced at Argaum, which was not to be compared to that of Assye? Luckily, I happened to be at no great distance from them, and I was able to rally them and re-establish the battle. If I had not been there, I am convinced we should have lost the day. But as it was, so much time elapsed before I could form them again, that we had not daylight enough for every thing that we should certainly have performed.

"The troops were under arms, and I was on horseback, from six in the morning until twelve at night."—*Ibid*.

The casualties at Argaum were thus officially returned :—

Killed	46
Wounded	295
Missing	8
<hr/>	
Total	349

pursuit by moonlight, and all the troops were under arms till a late hour in the night."

Nothing is more uncertain in war, than the exact time when the skill of the commander and the courage of the soldier shall be tried; and an army is frequently on the eve of battle, when a deceitful tranquillity would lead them to conclude that that event was distant. Such was the case at Argaum, and Colonel Welsh thus describes the march and opening of the action:—"Passing through a beautiful country full of game, we amused ourselves as usual, in hunting and shooting on the right flank the whole way, until, after a march of ten miles, we found our camp colours at a stand, and Colonel Stevenson's likewise pitched to our left. Shortly after we heard the sound of cannon in front, and missed the General and our pickets. He soon returned, and ordered us to shoulder, and move on with the guns. The country about us was so thickly covered with high grain, that we could see nothing in our front for the first three miles; when, coming near a walled village, and hearing the roar of cannon increase, we discovered that we had got into the vicinity of the enemy. The road through which alone we could advance, was much circumscribed by the high jowaree*—and although at the village it opened out a little, still our march was considerably impeded by the pickets and detachment which had led, being thrown into momentary disorder by the sudden opening of fifty pieces of cannon on them, the instant they had passed the village. As soon as we could pass through them, we formed in front of the village Sersooley, having a tolerably extensive plain of at least three miles before it, on which appeared the armies of Bonsala in the foreground, and Scindiah's in the rear; forming a kind of doubtful potency on either wing: the Berar infantry, with about fifty guns forming one line, with two thousand Arabs† on the left, and Bennee Syng's five thousand Ghosains in the centre.

* A kind of Indian corn.

† In the despatch of General Wellesley, they are called Persians; but the expression is used doubtfully.

"The precious remains of the gallant 74th were on our right, and beyond them the 78th; whilst on our left were the 1st battalion of the 4th, and the 2d regiment to the left of them; I could not see further. At about half-past four we were ordered to leave our guns and advance; Colonel Stevenson's force, which had further to march, having just then formed upon our left. It was a splendid sight to see such a line advancing, as on a field day; but the pause when the enemy's guns ceased firing, and they advanced in front of them, was an awful one. The Arabs,* a very imposing body, singled out our two European regiments; and when we arrived within about sixty yards, after a round of grape, which knocked down ten of our men, and about as many in each of the European regiments, they advanced and charged us, with tremendous shouts. Our three corps were at this time considerably in front of the rest of the line; and a struggle ensued, in which we killed and wounded about six hundred of these Arabs, and our corps alone took eight standards. Whilst this was acting, nearly in the centre, I observed Benec Syng's Ghosains, dressed like beef-eaters, bearing down to turn our flank; but, the Arabs once routed, and the rest of our line coming up, there was little more to do, and it was soon a perfect rout. The enemy's cavalry made two feeble attempts to charge our two flank corps, under Captains Maithurst and Vernon, but were repulsed by a steady fire from each. Our own cavalry had hitherto been kept in the rear, but the General now ordered them to charge; and they followed the enemy for some miles, cutting down about three thousand of the fugitives, who,

* "They are undoubtedly the bravest of all the troops that I have yet seen in the service of the native powers, and they defend the posts entrusted to their charge with determined valour; but I believe that they do not serve willingly except in garrison; they are a high-spirited people, and by no means amenable to discipline and order, which it is absolutely necessary should prevail in our camps and forts; and I believe that it has happened more than once in India, that they have mutinied, even when well treated, and have been the cause of terror to their employers."—*Wellington Despatches.*

however, contrived to carry away a few light guns, mounted as gallopers, but all their other cannon, ammunition and stores were taken. The field of battle was strewn with arms, and about one thousand sun-dial turbans, like those worn by the Bengal army; twenty or thirty standards also fell into our hands."*

Although thrown into disorder by the severity, as well as by the suddenness of the fire from the Marhatta guns in battery around the village, the native battalions, when rallied and brought forward by General Wellesley, fought with their usual gallantry. The conflict between the Arab troops† and British and Sepoy regiments was sanguinary while it lasted; and many displays of personal intrepidity were exhibited on both sides.

In point of number, the casualties were very few, but many of the wounded died afterwards in hospital; among these, a native officer‡ was included, and we record the circumstances, to show that Hindu bravery and devotion were alike appreciated by the comrades with whom he fought, and the Company under whom he served.

"He was at this time far advanced in life, and earned the respect and esteem of every European officer, as well as of every native in the corps. In action, he was the life and soul of those around him; and in devoted affection to the service he had no superior. The whole of the flesh and sinews of the hinder part of both thighs

* Military Reminiscences.

† Lieutenant Langlands, of the 74th, was attacked by a powerful Arab, who having thrown a spear, that cut through the fleshy part of the leg and stuck in the ground behind, rushed forward, sword in hand, to dispatch his intended victim. Langland plucked the spear from the ground, and launched it with such dexterity in return, that it passed right through the Arab's body, and pinned him to the ground. All eyes had been turned on the combatants—and a Grenadier sepoy sprang from the ranks, patted the lieutenant on the back, and exclaimed, "*Atchah Sahib! bhote atchah Keeah!*" (Well, sir!—very well done!) The Colonel adds, naively enough, "Our soldiers all enjoyed a hearty laugh before they concluded the work of death on the remainder of the ill-fated Arabs."—*Military Reminiscences.*

‡ Subadar Ally Cawn.

being torn away by a large shot, he fell, and could not rise again; but as soon as the action was over, he requested his attendants to carry him after us, that his dear European comrades might see him die. We had halted on the field, upwards of a mile in front of where he fell, when he arrived, and spoke to us with a firm voice and most affectionate manner, recounted his services, and bade us all adieu. We endeavoured to encourage him by asserting that his wound was not mortal, and that he would yet recover. He said, 'he felt assured of the contrary, but he was not afraid of death; he had often braved it in the discharge of his duty, and only regretted that he should not be permitted to render further services to his honourable masters.' He died shortly afterwards; and his son was pensioned on twelve pagodas a month—a most liberal provision for a native."*

* Welsh's Military Reminiscences.



CHAPTER XI.

MARCH ON GAWILGHUR—DESCRIPTION OF THAT FORTRESS—INVESTED AND CARRIED BY ASSAULT—CRUELTY OF BENY SING—EXEMPLARY CONDUCT OF THE TROOPS AFTER THE STORM—RAJAH OF BERAR SUBMITS—TERMS OF HIS TREATY WITH THE COMPANY—LETTER FROM THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY—TREATY CONCLUDED WITH SCINDIAH—ORDER OF COUNCIL—DISTURBANCES IN THE MARHATTA COUNTRY—GENERAL WELLESLEY MARCHES AGAINST THE BANDITTI—ATTACKS AND DEFEATS THEM NEAR PERINDA—CORRESPONDENCE WITH GENERALS STUART AND LAKE—LETTERS AND EXTRACTS FROM GENERAL WELLESLEY'S DESPATCHES.

GENERAL WELLESLEY followed up his decisive success at Argaum, by instantly advancing to besiege the fortress of Gawilghur. On the 5th, he reached Ellichpoor, where he established hospitals for his wounded; and after a day's rest, pushed forward with both divisions—Colonel Stevenson's by the mountain route of Damergaum, and the Major-General's to invest the southern front of the fort. The strength and position of the place, and the progress of the siege, are thus detailed by General Wellesley in his despatch of the 15th of December, to the Governor-General, dated from the camp of Deogaum.

“The fort of Gawilghur is situated in a range of mountains, between the sources of the rivers Poonah and Taptee. It stands on a lofty mountain in this range, and consists of one complete inner fort, which fronts to the south, where the rock is most steep; and an outer fort, which covers the inner to the north-west and north. This outer fort has a third wall, which covers the approach to it from the north by the village of Labada. All these walls are strongly built, and fortified by ramparts and towers.

“The communications with the fort are through three gates; one to the south with the inner fort, one to the north-west with the outer fort, and one to the north with the third wall. The ascent to the first is very long and steep, and is practicable only for men; that to the second is by a road used for the common communications of the garrison with the countries to the southward; but the road passes round the west side of the fort, and is exposed for a great distance to its fire; it is so narrow as to make it impracticable to approach regularly by it, and the rock is scarped on each side. This road also leads no farther than to the gate. The communication with the northern gate is direct from the village of Labada, and here the ground is level with that of the fort, but the road to Labada leads through the mountains for about thirty miles from Ellichpoor; and it was obvious, that the difficulty and labour of moving ordnance and stores to Labada would be very great.

“However, after making inquiry at Ellichpoor, it appeared both to Colonel Stevenson and me, that this point of attack was, upon the whole, the most advantageous, and we accordingly adopted it.

“Colonel Stevenson had equipped his corps at Asseerghur for the siege of Gawilghur, for which service it had long been destined; and I therefore determined that he should make the principal attack by Labada, while I should cover his operations with my own division and all the cavalry; and if possible assist them by other attacks to the southward and westward.

“On the 6th instant, the 1st battalion, 2d regiment, under Lieut.-Col. Chalmers, and two companies of the 94th, and the 1st battalion of the 6th, under Captain Maitland, were detached; the former to drive in the enemy from the ground which they occupied to the southward of the fort; and the latter to seize the fortified village of Damergaum, which covers the entrance of the mountains by the road by which Colonel Stevenson was to pass toward Labada, and to protect the parties sent forward to recon-

noitre and repair the roads in the mountains. Both these detachments succeeded.

“ On the 7th, both divisions marched from Ellichpoor ; Colonel Stevenson into the mountains by Damergaum, and my division towards the southern face of Gawilghur. From that day till the 12th, on which Colonel Stevenson broke ground near Labada, the troops in his division went through a series of laborious services, such as I never before witnessed, with the utmost cheerfulness and perseverance. The heavy ordnance and stores were dragged by hand over mountains and through ravines for nearly the whole distance, by roads which it had been previously necessary for the troops to make for themselves.

“ On the 12th, at night, Colonel Stevenson erected two batteries in front of the north face of the fort ; one consisting of two iron 18-pounders, and three iron 12-pounders, to breach the outer fort, and two 5-inch howitzers, to clear and destroy the defences on the point of attack.

“ On the same night the troops of my division constructed a battery for two brass 12-pounders in the mountain under the southern gate, with a view, if possible, to breach the wall near that gate, or, at all events, to draw the enemy's attention to that quarter.

“ Unfortunately, the iron guns could not be moved into the battery, notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the troops ; and the fire of the brass guns produced but little effect.

“ The fire of all these batteries opened on the 13th in the morning ; and on the 14th at night the breaches in the walls of the outer fort were practicable. All the arrangements were then made for storming on this day. Lieutenant-Colonel Kenny, of the 11th regiment, commanded the party for the storm, consisting of the flank companies of the 94th regiment, and of the native corps in Colonel Stevenson's division, supported by the 94th regiment, and Lieutenant-Colonel Halyburton's brigade, with Lieutenant-Colonel Maclean's brigade in reserve. At the same hour,

I made two attacks from the southward to draw the enemy's attention to that quarter. One, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace, consisting of the 74th regiment, five companies of the 78th, and 1st battalion, 8th regiment, on the southern gate; and one under Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers, consisting of five companies of the 78th, and the 1st battalion, 10th regiment, in the north-west gate. These last attacks could be of no service, except to draw the enemy's attention from that from the north; unless they should succeed in blowing open the gates; and till they should communicate with detachments from Colonel Stevenson's corps, as they had no other means of entering the fort. All the troops advanced at about ten in the morning. The detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers arrived at the north-west gate at the moment when the enemy were endeavouring to escape through it, from the detachment of Colonel Stevenson's corps, which had been sent to communicate with Colonel Chalmers; and he entered without difficulty.

"The wall of the inner fort, in which no breach had been made, was then to be carried. After some attempts upon the gate of communication between the inner and outer fort, a place was found at which it was possible to escalate the wall. Captain Campbell, with the light infantry of the 94th regiment, fixed the ladders against this place, escalated the wall, opened the gate for the storming party, and the fort was shortly in our possession.

"The enemy's garrison was numerous. It consisted of Rajpoots and of a great part of Beny Sing's regular infantry, which had escaped from the battle of Argaum, commanded by Beny Sing himself. They were all well armed with the Company's new muskets and bayonets. Vast numbers of them were killed, particularly at the different gates." *

Among the slain were Beny Sing and the killedar of the place. The former had fought with all the desperation of

* Wellington Despatches.

a man resolved to die ; and it was said that several of the assailants had fallen by his hand. Having determined not to survive the capture of the fortress, Beny Sing issued orders that his wives and daughters should be immolated, and thus preserved from the humiliation of captivity. The rajpoots, to whom the revolting duty was entrusted, from unskilfulness, or probably a better cause, executed the task of murder but indifferently. Of the devoted victims, three only were found dead, while the remainder had escaped unhurt, or received slight wounds, from which they subsequently recovered. From the conqueror they experienced a different treatment from that which they had been taught to expect. General Wellesley visited them himself, and ordered that every attention should be paid to those unfortunate women, which their rank and distinction required.

It had been generally supposed that Gawilghur would have proved a very lucrative conquest ; but the property found in the fortress did not realize the expectations of the besiegers ; and although pioneers were left by the Major-General to assist the prize-agents in searching for concealed treasure, nothing of great value was subsequently discovered. After the assault, the moderation displayed by the victors to the garrison and inhabitants, was truly honourable to British discipline and humanity, and elicited a commendatory notice from General Wellesley, in his letter of the 17th of December, addressed to Colonel Stevenson.

“ I have seen many places taken by storm, and I never saw one in which so little irregularity was committed, and which was so little plundered ; and it is but doing justice to the corps to declare, that in an hour after having stormed that large place, they marched out with as much regularity as if they had been only passing through it.”

The defeats of Assye and Argaum—the fall of a place hitherto considered impregnable—and the uniform success which over the peninsula of Hindustan had attended the

banners of England whenever they were unfurled, proved to the Marhatta princes, that their only chance of safety must spring from conditional submission.* Negotiations were accordingly resumed; and so necessary was it considered by the Rajah of Berar, that terms of amity between himself and the Company should be promptly restored, that the procrastination which generally distinguishes eastern diplomacy, was in this case avoided, and in two brief days a treaty was framed and subsequently ratified. Nothing could be more advantageous to Great Britain than the terms on which this pacification was effected. By the second article, the Company obtained in perpetual sovereignty the province of Cuttack, with the fort and district of Balasore. By the third, the whole of the territory, on which the Rajah collected revenues in participation with the Soubah of the Deccan, and the district west of the Wurda, were likewise ceded to the British Government. The fourth stipulated that the boundary of the Rajah's territory should be the western bank of the Wurda, from its *débouchement* in the Injardy hills, to its junction with the Godavery. The hills and forts of Nernulla and Gawilghur to be left in possession of the Rajah,—but every thing south of them, and west of the Wurda, to belong to the British Government and their allies.† The

* “ This well-planned, vigorous, and brilliant enterprise, brought the war to a speedy conclusion. The Rajah of Berar, sensible of his inability to resist the further progress of the British arms, alarmed for the safety of his dominions, and amazed at the rapidity of General Wellesley's operations, even in that mountainous country into which the war was now carried, saw no prudent or safe alternative but to sue for an immediate and separate peace, without waiting for the opinion, or the determination of his ally.”—*Asiatic Register*.

† “ It is said that Mohiput Ram, the Minister of the Nizam, in his anxiety to discover what portion of the ceded districts were to fall to the lot of his master, offered General Wellesley a bribe of 70,000*l.* to confide the secret. The offer was ludicrously but peremptorily rejected. So universal is corruption at native courts, that they have no conception that any functionary, how high soever, is above it. The conquests of the English were mainly ascribed by them to the incorruptible integrity of their officers, and the fidelity to engagements of their Government.”—*Auber*, vol. ii. p. 325.

fifth article provided that certain districts producing four lacs of rupees annually, should be given to the Rajah, the districts to be selected by Major-General Wellesley. The sixth article stipulated, that the Rajah should renounce every claim upon the territories thus ceded, and also on that of the Soubah of the Deccan. By the eighth article, the Rajah engaged never to take or retain any Frenchman, European, or American, in his service, whose states might at the time be at war with Great Britain—or any British subject whatever without the consent of that Government—and the Company undertook in return not to countenance any relations, Rajahs, or Zemindars, who should rebel against the Rajah's authority. Articles nine and ten provided, that accredited Ministers should reside at the respective courts of the contracting powers—and that certain treaties, made between the feudatories of the Rajah and the British Government, should be confirmed. By the eleventh article, the Rajah totally renounced all adherence and connexion with the Marhatta confederacy, as hitherto subsisting; and the twelfth stipulated, that this treaty should be ratified by Senah Saheb Soubah* within eight days, and formally delivered to Major-General Wellesley.

The triumph of Major-General Wellesley over the army of Dowlut Rao Scindiah, was not only a brilliant martial achievement, but an event that led to the most important political results. No victory was less expected for the cessation of hostilities which had been arranged between the Marhatta chief and British General, led to a natural belief that operations on both sides were terminated for a season, and that the armistice was but the forerunner of a peace. None, it would appear, had learned the extent of his brother's success with more surprise and more satisfaction than the Governor-General; and the following extract from a letter acknowledging his receipt of the despatch, contains the Marquess Wellesley's sentiments

* The titles of the Rajah of Berar.

regarding the importance of this well-timed and valuable conquest.

“ I received this morning your despatch of the 30th November from Paterley, with the account of your signal and most seasonable victory of Argaum. Although I entirely approved your armistice, and thought it a most judicious measure, I confess that I prefer your victory to your armistice; and I think your last battle must have removed every obstacle to peace, and facilitated every accommodation which can tend to enlarge the channels of amicable intercourse.

“ I have not discovered whether the battle was occasioned by a rupture of the truce on the part of Scindiah, or by Scindiah's refusal to grant to his vakeels the powers which you most properly have required, for the purpose of founding the basis of the negotiation on the admission of our retention of a part of our conquests; or by Scindiah's re-disavowal of his avowal of Jeswunt Rao Goorparah; or by an accidental rencontre of the armies before the truce had commenced; or by a treacherous junction between Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar. But *quacunq;ue via*, a battle is a profit with the native powers.” *

Scindiah's submission followed fast upon that of his late confederate, the Rajah of Berar. He agreed to cede to the English, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories, and rights in the Dooab, or country situated in northern Hindustan, between the rivers Ganges and Jumna, together with all his forts, territories, rights and interests in the districts which lie to the northward of the dominions of the Rajahs of Jeypoor and Joudpoor, and of the Ranah of Gohud. Secondly, to cede to the English, in perpetual sovereignty, the fort and territory of Baroach, in the Gujerat, and the fort and territory of Ahmednuggur, in the Deccan, and likewise all the territories which belonged to him before the commencement of the war, which are situated to the southward of the

* Wellington Despatches.

Adjuntee hills in the Deccan, including all the districts between that range of mountains and the river Godavery. Thirdly, to renounce for ever all claims upon the Emperor Shah Allum, and to engage never again to interfere in the affairs of that monarch. And, lastly, to engage never to take or retain in his service any Frenchman, or the subject of any European or American power, the government of which might be at war with the British government, or any British subject, whether European or Indian, without the consent of the British government.

On the part of the English government, certain forts and districts were restored; and all estates belonging to Scindiah's family were confirmed to him. Other lands held in jaghire by persons of the family of the late Mahager Scindiah, were permitted to remain in their possession; and he was allowed the advantages of subsidiary treaties existing between the British Government, the Peshwah, and the Soubadar of the Deccan. The treaty was ratified by Scindiah on the 5th of January, 1804, and approved and perfected by the Governor-General, on the 13th of February at Calcutta.

These treaties, as beneficial to the interests as honourable to the military efficiency of Great Britain, elicited from the Governor-General and Court of Directors sentiments of unqualified approbation; and a declaration of the high sense they entertained of Major-General Wellesley's valuable services was transmitted to him in an order of Council, dated Fort William, 9th January, 1804:—

“Your despatch, dated the 17th of December, 1803, enclosing the copy of a treaty of peace concluded by you on that date, on the part of the Honourable Company with the Rajah of Berar, has been received and submitted to the Governor-General in Council.

“The Governor-General in Council has great satisfaction in communicating to you, his high approbation of the terms of peace concluded with the Rajah of Berar, which his Excellency in Council considers to be in the highest degree advantageous, honourable, and glorious to the British Government.

“The Governor-General in Council discharges a satisfactory part of his duty, in expressing to you the high sense which he entertains of the judgment and ability manifested by you on this occasion. The Governor-General in Council considers you to have rendered an essential service to the interests of the Honourable Company, and to have augmented the reputation of the British name, by the conclusion of this advantageous and honourable treaty.”

General Wellesley, as might be expected after the bodily and mental labour attendant on his arduous campaign, required a season of repose; but this for the present was denied. The Marhatta country was completely unsettled: and the disbandment of the immense military establishments of the native chieftains, had thrown a multitude of their retainers loose upon the world, without either the means or wish of obtaining more peaceful occupations than those they had hitherto pursued. Hence, the General was obliged to keep the field, and sacrifice personal ease to public duty. While still retaining command in the Mysore, although his state of health required that the camp should be changed for the city,* his despatches occasionally disclose the lamentable imbecility and corruption, which pervaded every department of the native government.

“We must keep up the troops about the Godavery, till every thing shall have been settled, and every body gone to his home; but I cannot exactly decide upon this point, till I shall have received further intelligence from the southward, and shall know the exact extent of the disturbances in the Nizam’s territories. They began almost immediately after I had passed through the Ghauts to the northward; and it is said, have spread greatly. * * * *

“In fact, the Peshwah’s government is at present only a name. His Highness has not settled even the country along the Beemah, five miles from Poonah. It is at this

* “I am much annoyed by the lumbago, a disorder to which I believe all persons in camp are liable; and if I do not go into a house soon, I am afraid I shall walk like old Pomeroy for the remainder of my life.”

moment a dreary waste, overrun by thieves; and his Highness is incapable of conducting his government himself: he gives no confidence or power to any body, and he has no person about him able to conduct the common business of the country. * * * *

Either our troops must be scattered up and down the country to garrison mud villages, and the officers to carry on the amildary; or the mud villages must remain without tannahs, and the amildary in the hands of the thieves who now hold it, unless the Peshwah should put his government into some form.”*

It was not surprising, with such an immense number of mercenary soldiers, left entirely to their own resources, that a country so miserably misgoverned should be overrun by a formidable banditti, and made the constant scene of violence and plunder. Unable to protect their wretched subjects, the native princes calmly witnessed the most alarming outrages, or delegated to the officers of the Company the task of preserving order in their dominions. In alluding to a letter from Scindiah, General Wellesley remarks, that it “contains a desire that I should attack Mulwa Dada; and I see clearly that unless I go across the Godavery, that banditti will never be driven out of the country. The Nizam’s servants who, at the commencement of the campaign, drove us away from their forts, and refused to allow us to purchase grain in their country, now press me, by dozens of letters in a day, to move to their assistance, otherwise they will be destroyed.” Yielding to these anxious solicitations, the British general marched rapidly to their relief; and nothing could exceed the mortification he experienced on his arrival, in finding that the banditti had eluded his pursuit, and quitted the country after obtaining contributions.†

* Extracts from Wellington’s Despatches.

† “The freebooters are off. The Nizam’s killadar and amildars have behaved upon this occasion with their usual fortitude and good sense, in paying their contributions, at the moment at which they heard that I had arrived in the country to give them assistance.”— *Wellington Despatches*.

Disgusted as he must have felt at the pusillanimous conduct of the functionaries of the Nizam, General Wellesley had determined to strike a blow, if possible, that should cause these wild marauders to tremble at the thought of British retribution. One of the corps of his Highness had been already defeated by these brigands, and routed with the loss of its guns; and the existence of any thing like tranquillity in the Mysore, depended on the extirpation of a banditti which every day were increasing in numbers and audacity. But great difficulties presented themselves; the routes were nearly impassable—the country difficult—the guides* not to be relied upon—and the allies much better inclined to befriend the freebooters, than assist in their destruction.† Notwithstanding all these discouraging circumstances, the British commander persevered; and aided by that good fortune which good judgment generally ensures, his success was perfect.

"Camp at Munkaiseer, 15 miles N.E. from Perinda,

"SIR,†

"February 5, 1804.

"I this morning attacked in this neighbourhood, and defeated and dispersed, a formidable band of freebooters, who have been for some time on this frontier.

"I left my camp on the 3d, about thirty miles S.E. from Ahmednuggur; and I arrived, by forced marches, at Sailgaon, near Perinda, on the 4th. I there heard that the enemy were at this place, twenty-four miles from me; and although I had marched twenty miles that morning, I determined to march on in the night. The road was very bad, and till one o'clock the night was very dark, and we made but little progress. The consequence was, that we

* "I endeavoured to imitate you, and to surprise them; but the night was dark, the road desperately bad, and my allies, like true Marhattas, gave them information."—*Major-Gen. Wellesley to Major-Gen. Campbell, Feb. 6, 1804.*

† "The Nizam's rascals in this country have given me false intelligence of the practicability of the Ghauts; and I am in consequence a little thrown out in my pursuit of the thieves."—*Wellington Despatches.*

‡ The despatch is addressed to Lieut.-General Stuart.

did not arrive till nine in the morning, instead of at daylight. The enemy had received intelligence of my approach; I believe from my own camp. They had struck their camp and had begun their march, but were still in sight. I pursued them with the cavalry, cut up some, and took all their guns, baggage, bazaar, &c., and followed them as long as they remained collected. I had with me the cavalry, the 74th regiment, the 1st of the 8th, and 500 men from the other regiments.

"The camp is at Ningaum, where I left it on the 3d. The infantry were up with the cavalry when we advanced to the attack. The Marhatta and Mysore horse were very active, and got much booty. Our loss is trifling. I shall send you a regular account of this expedition, as soon as it can be made out."

Although in the dispersion of a predatory body, there was little of that glory which a soldier courts, whether considered in its results as it influenced the tranquillizing the country, or in its achievement, it was an effort of no ordinary character. Speaking of it, General Wellesley says,—

"This was the greatest exertion I ever saw troops make in any country. The infantry was in the attack, although we marched sixty miles between the morning of the 4th, and twelve o'clock at noon of the 5th of February; and yet I halted from noon till eight at night of the 4th."

With this affair, the military career of General Wellesley in India may have been said to close. The reduction of Candore by his division, was effected in his absence; and during the short period of his sojourn afterwards in the East, to civil, rather than to military arrangements, his time and his talents were principally applied. The remainder of the Indian era of his life, we shall only mark by desultory notices; for though there might be found much in his correspondence which would be considered indicative of talent in common men, the general interest sinks so immeasurably, when compared with the after occurrences of

his most eventful life, that we shall be guided in selections from his Despatches, rather from the extracts marking earlier character, than being themselves of particular importance.

Holkar, after the submission of Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, occupied the attention of the British Government. His animosity to the Company was undisguised, his power formidable, and his conduct particularly suspicious. The following extracts from letters addressed to Generals Stuart and Lake, show how correctly General Wellesley's inferences were formed, and how fully his predictions regarding Holkar were verified by after events.

“ *March 17, 1804.*

“The conduct of Holkar is still dubious. He has written to me a letter, dated about the 1st of February, in terms very civil and respectful towards myself, but much otherwise towards General Lake, whose letter he has not answered, and whom he threatens in his letter to me. I rather think it will be necessary for the Governor-General to order him to be attacked, unless he should alter his tone, and adopt a line of conduct more suitable to his interests in the present situation of affairs, by which the Governor-General may be enabled to save him. This is possible, as Holkar's power depends upon his avoiding to come in contact with the British troops; and he will see that he cannot avoid this much longer, as soon as he shall hear of the alliance with Scindiah.

“He must then determine to adopt one of three lines, viz. either to adopt the line of conduct prescribed to him by General Lake; or to enter into a war and fight General Lake; or to go away by Ajmeer, into the Seik countries, and endeavour to establish himself among the Seiks and Afghans. He cannot delay his decision in the usual Marhatta style, as General Lake will not give him time, after so much has elapsed, and the rainy season approaching. I rather think, therefore, that he will go off to the Punjaub;

and what gives me stronger reason to think so is, that on the seal of his letter to me, he calls himself the slave of Shah Mahmoud, the king of kings. Shah Mahmoud is the brother of Zemaun Shah. He seized the musnud and government of Caubul after having defeated Zemaun Shah, two or three years ago, and put out his eyes; but he was, in his turn, defeated and dethroned very lately by another brother, assisted by the king of Persia.

" Holkar has taken this title either to frighten us with the prospect of an invasion of India by the Afghans, or he has really communicated with and entered the service of Mahmoud Shah. In the latter case, he may be going to the Punjaub; and his march to Ajmeer, and the state to which he has reduced the whole of Hindustan and the Deccan, and the certainty that he cannot now subsist his troops any where, without coming in contact with the British troops, render that movement very probable. In that case, the war with Holkar will be delayed to a very distant period, if it ever takes place at all."

" Lieut.-General Stuart."

" May 27, 1804.

" SIR,

" * * * * * The account you give of the state of Holkar's army is very satisfactory. I have served a good deal in this part of India against this description of freebooter; and I think the best mode of operating, is to press him with one or two corps capable of moving with tolerable celerity, and of such strength as to render the result of an action by no means doubtful, if he should venture to risk one. There is but little hope, it is true, that he will risk an action, or that any one of these corps will come up with him. The effect to be produced by this mode of operation, is to oblige him to move constantly and with great celerity. When reduced to this necessity, he cannot venture to stop to plunder the country, and he does comparatively but little mischief; at all events, the subsistence of his army becomes difficult and precarious,

the horsemen become dissatisfied, they perceive that their situation is hopeless, and they desert in numbers daily; the freebooter ends by having with him only a few adherents; and he is reduced to such a state as to be liable to be taken by any small body of country horse, which are the fittest troops to be then employed against him.

“In proportion as the body of our troops, to be employed against a freebooter of this description, have the power of moving with celerity, will such freebooter be distressed. Whenever the largest and most formidable bodies of them are hard pressed by our troops, the village people attack them upon their rear and flanks, cut off stragglers, and will not allow a man to enter their villages; because their villages being in some degree fortified, they know well that the freebooters dare not wait the time which would be necessary to reduce them. When this is the case, all their means of subsistence vanish, no resource remaining excepting to separate; and even this resource is attended by risk, as the village people cut them off in their way to their homes.

“I have the pleasure to inform you that I have great hopes that I shall be able to move, and to make the siege of Chandore in the course of the month of June. Every thing is ready. The troops have been clothed and equipped, and I wait only for a fall of rain to ensure water.

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“Lieut.-General Lake.”

“ARTHUR WELLESLEY.”

The firmness of principle which influenced General Wellesley's opinions regarding public duty, and the inflexible resolution he always exercised in punishing any thing approaching to dishonesty, when brought professionally under notice, will be instanced in the two succeeding extracts. The first conveys a refusal of leave of absence, sought for on private grounds by the Collector of Ahmednuggur.

“It is necessary for a man who fills a public situation, and who has great public interests in charge, to lay aside all private considerations, whether on his own account or that

of other persons. I imagine that you must feel on this subject as I do.

"I am very much distressed on account of the inconveniences which your family suffer in your absence from Madras; and equally so, that it is not in my power to relieve their distress, by allowing you to quit your situation. But under present circumstances it is not in my power to grant your request to go to Madras, consistently with the duty which both you and I owe to the public as public men."

The second letter, from its address, was evidently written to a person who had once possessed the General's confidence; and it proves, that with him private feeling had no weight when public interests were in question.

"Seringapatam, July 17, 1804."

"DEAR _____"

"I have received your letter, in which, among other things, you reproach me with having withdrawn from you my confidence. A man must have been stout indeed in his confidence in any body who would continue to repose it, after having received such complaints as I have received against you.

"In respect to your money concerns, I do not wish to inquire into them, excepting to observe, that a person trusted as you were ought to have refrained from such practices when you held a public trust. It is not the fact that you did Major _____'s duty without receiving his salary. You received the allowance for the duty you did, and your own allowance for the duty done by another person in the field.

"I shall close upon this subject by telling you, that it is useless to go into long proofs of matter entirely irrelevant to the charge brought against you. You have been accused, on oath in a public trial, of having received, through your moonshee, 1200 rupees on corrupt grounds. The moonshee positively received the money. He must be prosecuted in the Phousdarry,* and convicted of a breach of trust and

* The Criminal Court in Mysore.

duty, otherwise you must resign your office of _____. I cannot go on with a man against whom there will be such a public imputation as there will be against you, if the moonshee should not be convicted of having taken and applied this money to his own use."

A military riot at Surat occasioned the following letter from General Wellesley to the Secretary at Bombay :—

"I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 23d of November, upon the subject of the conduct of the military at Surat. When the residence of officers who have been accused of improper and riotous conduct has been described, names have in some instances been stated, and in all a description of their persons, and of their mode of conveyance, has been given, it is scarcely to be credited that the commanding officer had it not in his power to discover those who were accused. At all events, measures might, and ought to have been adopted by the commanding officer to put an end to these disgraceful proceedings, which it appears he entirely neglected.

"Under these circumstances, I take the liberty of recommending, first, that the commanding officer of Surat may be removed from his situation; and secondly, that orders may be given to the civil magistrate to seize, and send to Bombay for trial in the Court of the Recorder, any officer who may hereafter be accused of rioting in the streets or city of Surat."

Strict in the maintenance of social order, General Wellesley wisely determined that, when necessary for example, punishments should be rigidly carried out. His, however, was not a system of indiscriminate visitation of crime; and while murderers and marauders found no lenity at his hands, mercy, when it could be with safety, was extended to the guilty. With him caste or colour made no difference—rank threw no mantle over the offender—and the following extracts will abundantly prove, that his military government was remarkable as well for its impartiality as its strictness. In writing to Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace, the General says,—

" You must have no scruple in acting at once for the benefit and safety of your corps, whenever you are fully convinced, from the evidence given to the persons appointed to inquire into the circumstances of any robbery, that those attached to your camp have been plundered or ill-treated.

" In this instance, I have no doubt but that Carribul and Manygee were both guilty of the murder. Accordingly I request that they may be hanged; and let the cause of their punishment be published in the bazaar by beat of tom-tom, or in any other mode by which it may be supposed that it will be rendered more public.

" The patel* of Batculgaum, in the usual style of a Marhatta patel, keeps a band of plunderers for his own profit and advantage. You will inform him that if he does not pay for the horses, bullocks, and articles plundered, he shall be hanged also. You will make him acquaint his village with this determination, and allow time for the answer to return; and you will hang him if he does not pay the money at the time fixed upon.

" It is impossible to get on without these punishments in the Marhatta country. The Peshwah has no authority; and if he had, he would not exert it for the advantage of our troops."

And yet we find him applying to General Stuart, and pleading the gallantry of the corps, as an apology for saving the regiment from the disgrace of having an unworthy member subjected to capital punishment:—

" I think it very desirable to avoid punishing with death a man belonging to the 74th regiment, and therefore I propose to offer to the man to commute his punishment to transportation for life to Botany Bay. By this mode the punishment of death will be avoided, and the 74th regiment will get rid of a bad soldier."

While in India, General Wellesley was remarkable for the affability with which he received the inferior officers with whom he carried on his communications, while with

* The hereditary manager of an Indian village.

those of his own rank there was a cordiality in action, and a total absence of any thing like jealousy of another's success. None more readily bore testimony to merit in a rival; and no one was more free to acknowledge obligations, and impute to good feeling, what, in point of fact, was only the meed of approbation his own desert elicited. In a letter to Lieutenant-General Stuart he writes thus:—

“I must first take the liberty of expressing my acknowledgments for the handsome manner in which you have been pleased to notice my services, in your despatches to His Royal Highness the Duke of York, and to his Majesty's Ministers.

“In the course of the operations entrusted to me, I certainly had difficulties to encounter which are inseparable from all military service in this country, but I enjoyed an advantage which but few have had in a similar situation. I served under the immediate orders of an officer who was fully aware of the nature of the operations to be performed; and who, after considering all that was to be done, gave me his full confidence and support, in carrying into execution the measures which the exigency of the service might require. Under these circumstances I was enabled to undertake anything with confidence; and if I failed, I was certain it would be considered with indulgence.

“I declare that I cannot reflect upon the events of the last year, without feeling for you the strongest sentiments of gratitude, respect, and attachment; and to have received these marks of approbation has given me more real satisfaction, than all that I have received from other quarters.”

With another letter we shall close these notices. It is addressed to his old companion in arms, Colonel Stevenson; and the brotherly regard it breathes for that brave man's prosperity has induced us to extract it as highly honourable to the manly feelings of the conqueror of Assye.

“I have this day received your letters of the 23d and 27th of January. A duplicate of my letter to Major Kirkpatrick on the subject of your allowance from the

Nizam shall go to him this day. I had recommended to the Governor-General that you should have additional prize-money, and I think that he will attend to my recommendation in this instance. However, this is between ourselves. My idea respecting you entering the king's service was this, that you should get your rank in England, and a regiment in what is called the army of reserve.

"If you should succeed in that object, you might then resign your regiment or brigade of cavalry in this country, but not your pension on retirement. If you should not succeed, you ought not to give up your regiment or brigade here, without having a further provision. These are my opinions; you will see how affairs stand when you get home, and can arrange accordingly.

"I am anxious, first, that the public should continue to enjoy the benefit of your services, in a country of which the climate may be more favourable to your health; and next, that you should have the satisfaction of serving in a war which goes to the existence of Great Britain as a nation. But you must not lose your income by it."



CHAPTER XII.

REJOICINGS IN INDIA—ADDRESS TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL—HIS REPLY—RESOLUTIONS IN CONSEQUENCE—THANKS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT VOTED TO LORD WELLESLEY AND THE INDIAN ARMIES—LETTERS FROM LORDS CASTLEREAGH AND CAMDEN—HONORS CONFERRED ON GENERALS LAKE AND WELLESLEY—THE LATTER WISHES TO RETURN TO EUROPE, AND RESIGNS HIS COMMAND—ADDRESSES ON HIS DEPARTURE—GENERAL ORDER TO THE DECCAN ARMY—REVIEW OF HIS INDIAN CAREER—COLONEL MONSON'S AFFAIR—EFFECT OF FAMILY INFLUENCE—THE NATIVE ARMY—ANECDOTES—SUMMARY OF WELLINGTON'S CHARACTER.

THE unbounded exultation evinced by all classes throughout India, when the short but brilliant campaign of General Wellesley terminated in the overthrow and submission of the Marhatta potentates, can scarcely be imagined. In every settlement and town, the inhabitants testified their feelings and sentiments by public rejoicings, "and their pleasure was mingled and heightened with an admiration of those sagacious counsels, comprehensive views, and energetic measures, which, in the short space of five months, had discomfited the armies of the confederates, conquered many of their most valuable provinces, and obtained the rational triumph of a secure and glorious peace."*

An address, signed by all the principal inhabitants of Calcutta, was presented to the Governor-General, on the 29th of February, expressing their entire concurrence in the justice and necessity of the war—their admiration of the manner in which it was planned, as well as of the heroic energy with which it was conducted; and their appro-

* Memoir of the War in India.

bation of that enlarged, but moderate system of policy, on the principles of which, the general peace of Hindustan was established.

To this address the Governor-General returned an answer, in which he expressed, in modest and dignified terms, his cordial satisfaction at the favourable sentiments entertained by the inhabitants of Calcutta, in regard to the principles which regulated his conduct from the origin to the close of the late contest, as well as to his general administration of public affairs; and after pointing out the national advantages likely to result from the treaties of peace which had been just concluded, he stated his confident hopes that the condition of the people of India should be gradually ameliorated, by a steady pursuance of that political system, which he had now finally established, for the government of the British provinces.

On receiving this answer, certain resolutions, which had been unanimously passed at the meeting of the inhabitants, were presented to the Governor-General. These were, to erect a marble statue of his Excellency, at Calcutta, as a lasting memorial of the high sense entertained by the inhabitants of his eminent public services; to present a sword to General Lake, as a testimony of their exalted opinion of the distinguished service which he had rendered his country; and, lastly, to present a sword to Major-General Wellesley, as a testimonial of his conduct having inspired similar sentiments. To these resolutions the Governor-General returned suitable replies; and measures were accordingly taken for carrying them into effect.

It has been considered as rather unaccountable, why the triumphant termination of the Indian war, should fail to create in England a greater sensation than it did. It is true, that affairs at home were in a position of perilous insecurity, and the very existence of the empire was endangered. These were sufficient causes to excite an absorbing interest; and attention was too deeply engrossed

with the domestic situation of the country, to allow men to occupy themselves much with events transacted at the distance at which the victories of Lake and Wellesley were achieved. Still it seems surprising, that when the parliament was devising measures for defending from a menaced invasion, not the more exposed coasts of Britain, but the Metropolis itself, that even remoter successes, in that time of perplexity, should not have been hailed as harbingers of better fortunes—and that the dawning of glory in the East, should not have stimulated the Government to fresh exertion, although in every place save Hindustan, its efforts had ended in disasters, and national confidence had sunk almost to despondency.

When intelligence of the success of the Indian armies reached England, however, the thanks of parliament were voted to the Governor-General, and to the commanders, officers, and soldiers which had shared in the glory of the contest; and a despatch from Lord Castlereagh, dated the 19th of May, 1804, and received overland on the 14th of the following October, apprized the Governor-General that an honourable distinction had been conferred by the British Parliament upon the troops his Lordship had so successfully employed. "The convoy, which sailed about ten days since, will have carried to your Lordship, and to the gallant army employed by you in the field, the thanks and acknowledgments of parliament, for the splendid and important services which have been rendered to the country in the late glorious campaign. In the hope of being able to acquaint your Lordship, with the King's sentiments and determination with regard to the individuals most conspicuously engaged in this brilliant career of victory, I delayed writing from day to day, till the ships had actually sailed. The packet now under despatch will probably outstrip the convoy, and thus enable me to be amongst the first to offer to your Lordship my cordial congratulations on the series of events, than which none have ever occurred in the military history of our country, more proudly calculated to

confirm, and even exalt the reputation and glory of the British arms. The whole of this campaign, in the conception of the plan, in the preparation of the army for the field, in the application of it to the vulnerable and important points of the enemy's territory, and above all, in the conduct of the army in the day of battle, must ever be deemed a *chef-d'œuvre* of military energy, foresight, and science; and cannot fail, in this age of arms, to augment, by the confidence which it is calculated to inspire, our security, not only in the East, but in every quarter of the empire, at home and abroad. I lament that the King's health has not yet admitted of his perusing the interesting details of those services which have been performed by his Indian army; no representation can do the same justice to their merits; and it is to his Majesty's personal conviction of the claim they have on the gratitude of their country, and the favour of their sovereign, that the individuals would, I am persuaded, alone wish to owe the reward which they have so well and so nobly earned."

In a subsequent communication from the Colonial Office, Lord Camden acquainted the Marquess Wellesley, how highly the services of Generals Lake and Wellesley had been appreciated by their royal master.

"The brilliant and decisive success that has attended the progress of the armies, which have been employed in the East Indies under the command of General Lake and Major-General Wellesley, is justly appreciated by his Majesty; and I have in consequence received his Majesty's commands to inform your Lordship, that in consideration of the meritorious services, and gallant conduct of General Lake, his Majesty has been graciously pleased to create him a Peer of the United Kingdom of England and Ireland;* and that, in consideration also of the eminent and brilliant services of Major-General Wellesley, his Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct that the insignia of the most honourable Order of the Bath should be transmitted to

* The titles of Lord Lake, were Baron Lake of Delhi and Laswaree.

that officer ; and that he may immediately evince his sense of Major-General Wellesley's merits and services, his Majesty has further directed that he shall be created an extra Knight Companion of that order, and that his creation and investiture shall not wait for a succession to a regular vacancy therein."

General Wellesley had for some time expressed an anxious wish to retire from his command in the Mysore. While the war with Holkar was being carried on, by a skilful distribution of the army of the Deccan, the Marhatta chiefs, whose loyalty was very questionable, were completely overawed ; and with every inclination to be troublesome, they were necessitated to remain pacific. General Wellesley had many causes of complaint—he was disliked by the Peshwah—his measures were sometimes rendered inoperative by restrictions of the government—and occasional notices in his despatches, show that he felt these annoyances. In one letter, he says,—

" I think we are shaking a little at Madras. I hear that the arrangement I had made in the bullock department, consequent on the death of poor Mackay, although the only one that could keep it, and consequently the army together, is disapproved of, and it is to be altered after the campaign. All this is very well ; but the government, upon the present scale, cannot be carried on, as it has been, if confidence be not placed in the persons employed ; and if they and their acts are liable to misrepresentation in their absence." In another he remarks,—" I think it desirable that I should soon quit this country. The Peshwah has manifested a most unaccountable jealousy of me personally ; and has refused to adopt certain measures, evidently calculated for his advantage, only because I recommended them. He has allowed their benefit, and has avowed this motive for refusing to adopt them. We have always found it very difficult to manage him ; but it will become quite impossible, if this principle is allowed to guide his conduct. I therefore think it best that

I should go away as soon as possible ; and I am certainly very desirous of getting some rest."

Whether from these causes, or that " he was prompted to return to Europe by that hidden law which so often makes the temporary vexations of men, selected by Providence for special purposes, the means of turning them into their appointed theatre, he felt the influence of that mysterious yearning, which, even in the midst of honours and power, prompts the destined actors in great events to pant for higher glories."*

When it was officially announced that General Wellesley had determined to return to England, addresses were voted by numerous public bodies ; and a magnificent vase was presented to him by the commanding officers and heads of departments, attached to the army of the Deccan. This costly present was accompanied by the following address :—

" The officers who served with the division of the army under your immediate command in the Deccan are desirous of presenting you a pledge of their respect and esteem ; and to express the high idea they possess of the gallantry and enterprise that so eminently distinguish you, they request your acceptance of a golden vase of the value of 2000 guineas, on which it is proposed to record the principal event that was decisive of the campaign in the Deccan.

" In conveying to you this mark of their esteem, they sincerely add their wishes for your future welfare and prosperity ; and their hopes that when the public claims on your talents allow you repose, this vase may give pleasure to your social habits, in bringing to your remembrance events that add so much to your renown."

Among other testimonials of esteem, none was more affectionate than one presented to General Wellesley by the native inhabitants of Seringapatam ; as in the simple language of the East, it breathed the most ardent prayers to " the God of all castes and colours" for his future prosperity and glory.

* Alison.

On the 10th of March, General Wellesley embarked for England on board the Trident man-of-war, having notified in a general order to the troops his resignation of the command in the Deccan, and immediate departure from India.

"Fort St. George, March 9, 1805.

"Major-General Sir Arthur Wellesley informs the troops under his command, that he has received the permission of his Excellency, the Governor-General, to resign the political and military powers with which he had been lately intrusted in the Deccan, and the leave of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to proceed to England.

"He cannot avoid expressing the regret which he feels upon taking leave of officers and troops with whom he has served so long.

"In the course of the period of time which has elapsed since Major-General Wellesley was appointed to a command of the division of this army, various services have been performed by the troops, and great difficulties have been surmounted, with a steadiness and perseverance which have seldom been surpassed. Upon every occasion, whether in garrison or in the field, the Major-General has had reason to be satisfied with their conduct, and he once more returns them his thanks, and assures them that he shall never forget their services, or cease to feel a lively interest in whatever may concern them.

"He earnestly recommends to the officers of the army, never to lose sight of the general principles of the military service, to preserve the discipline of the troops, and to encourage in their respective corps the spirit and sentiments of gentlemen and of soldiers, as the most certain road to the attainment of everything that is great in their profession."

The General concludes by specially thanking the officers commanding districts and divisions, from whom he had always received the most cordial and valuable assistance.

In reviewing General Wellesley's Indian career, strong evidence will be found to prove, how much the actions of military commanders are obnoxious to misrepresentation; and how little their most brilliant efforts are appreciated or understood. At Seringapatam, the night attacks upon Suldaun-pet were set forth under Wellesley, as a defeat, and under Baird, as an achievement; and yet, in point of fact, no analogy existed between them. To enter an undefended post, is an exploit on which no soldier plumes himself; and on the night of the 4th of May, the whole position did not contain a single matchlock. On the 5th, the entire chain of posts, tope and aqueduct, village and enclosures, all were crowded with the Suldaun's best troops; and in the dense darkness an attack failed, which in daylight proved successful. Regarding the battle of Assye, still more absurd remarks were hazarded; and the victor was accused of rashness in risking an engagement, when the most brilliant consequences resulted from its successful issue. Never were conclusions more fallacious, than in asserting that Wellesley's attack at Assye was a hasty or incautious experiment. It was a daring, but a deliberate effort—for no alternative was left. Deceived by false intelligence, and once fairly in presence of the enemy, retreat was ruin; and quick decision and iron nerve, alone saved General Wellesley in this alarming exigency.

In controverted questions, it is said, that parallel cases afford the best conclusions for decision; and in a military occurrence which took place the following year, in many points, there exists such close resemblance between the position of Wellesley at Assye, and Monson on the Chumbul, that we shall briefly state them.

In the April of 1804, the Marhatta hordes were driven to the westward by Lord Lake, Rampoora carried by assault, and Holkar considered so entirely reduced in military and financial resources, that the troops were retired to their cantonments on the frontier, there to await until the rainy season should terminate, and enable the

British General, in a brief campaign, to annihilate the remnant of that power, which had once made Holkar's name so formidable.

Colonel Monson, when General Lake returned to Delhi, was left at Malwa, two hundred miles in advance of the grand army. His force consisted of four thousand regular troops, fifteen pieces of cannon, and three thousand irregular horse. Instead of remaining to observe the strong pass of Mokundra, he imprudently passed the defiles of the mountains, entered Hindustan, and carried the fortress of Henglaigush by assault. Holkar, irritated at the boldness of this incautious step, turned his whole force against the British commander, and with forty thousand men and one hundred and sixty guns, advanced by rapid marches, to overtake and destroy the rash enemy, who had ventured so far within his territory, and that too, with a force so immensely inferior to his own. There was but one chance by which Colonel Monson could have rescued his small corps from its most perilous situation; and, startling as it may appear, that was by himself becoming the assailant—and instead of retreating before the Marhatta chief, to have boldly advanced, and dared an engagement.

To reach the devoted band, it was necessary for Holkar to cross the Chumbul. The river was deep and rapid—the banks were steep—and heavy rains had swollen the waters of the stream far beyond their ordinary height. To pass forty thousand men across, of whom twenty thousand were cavalry, embarrassed with an enormous quantity of baggage, and a park of one hundred and sixty pieces, could not have been effected without great delay, and still greater confusion. *Then*, was the time for action,—*there*, was the place to strike the blow; and by daringly advancing and disputing the passage of the river, Monson might have rendered the banks of the Chumbul as celebrated in the records of glory as the villages of Laswaree and Assye.

“ It then appeared of what importance is military skill and moral resolution in Indian warfare; and how much the

brilliant career of Lord Wellesley's victories had been dependent on the daring energy, which, seizing the initiative, never lost it till the enemy was destroyed. Monson was as brave as any officer in the English army; second to none in undaunted valour at storming a breach, but he wanted the rarer quality of moral intrepidity, and the power of adopting great designs on his own responsibility. On the 6th of July, Holkar was engaged in crossing the Chumbul; the fortunate moment of attack, never to be recalled, was allowed to escape; and two days afterwards, the English general commenced his retreat. He did what ordinary officers would have done at Assye, when it was ascertained Stevenson's division could not come up; and what was the result? In a few hours the subsidiary horse, now four thousand strong, which was left to observe the enemy, was enveloped by clouds of the Marhatta cavalry, and after a bloody struggle, cut to pieces with their gallant commander."*

Painful as the sequel proved, it may yet be briefly told. Colonel Monson gained the Makundra pass, and afterwards retreated to Kotah and Rampoor, after abandoning his artillery. Reinforced by two battalions and three thousand irregular horse, he quitted the fort and marched directly for the British frontier. Heavy rains fell; and on reaching the banks of the Bannas, he found the stream impassable. The position of this ill-fated corps was truly desperate. "In their front was a raging torrent, in their rear twenty thousand horsemen, continually receiving fresh accessions of strength in infantry and guns, as they successively came up. The river having at length become fordable, four battalions crossed over; and the enemy, seeing his advantage, immediately commenced a furious attack on the single battalion and pickets, which now remained alone on the other side. With such heroic constancy, however, was this unequal contest maintained by these brave men, that they not only repulsed the whole attacks made upon them,

* Alison.

but, pursuing their success, captured several of the enemy's guns; an event which clearly demonstrated what results might have followed the adoption of a vigorous offensive in the outset, when the troops were undiminished in strength and unbroken in spirit."

Disasters followed fast upon each other. The sepoy guard who accompanied the military chests was attacked by the cavalry of Scindiah, their own ally; and when the Marhattas were defeated, they treacherously deserted to Holkar. The whole of the irregular horse, which had reinforced Monson at Rampoor, followed the example; and a few companies of sepoys—a rare occurrence among those faithful people—quitted their ranks, and joined this enemy. Formed in oblong square, the greater portion of the latter part of the retreat was executed*—fifteen thousand horse, incessantly harassing in front, flank, and rear, the retiring column—and only kept at bay by the indomitable courage, and unbroken formation of the remnant of this glorious division. At last, worn down by fatigue, and reduced by casualties and desertion of twelve thousand men, scarcely a thousand entered Agra, without cannon, baggage, or ammunition, and only fit for the hospitals, and afterwards to be invalided.

To family influence Wellington's earlier success has been mainly attributed; and none will deny that the patronage of his gifted brother, first opened to the young soldier that arduous path, which ultimately led to fame and fortune. But who shall assert that the outbursts of a master mind were not discernible, from the first moment when he received an independent command; and that in an affair which was little more than the destruction of a brigade,† the

* "But the Hindu privates never showed the least symptoms of faintness or despondence, saying, 'Keep up your spirits, Sir; we will bring you safely to Agra.' When in square, and sustaining charges of the enemy's horse, it more than once happened, when a musket was fired by a young soldier, that a veteran struck him with the butt end of his firelock, exclaiming, 'Are you mad, to destroy our discipline, and make us like the rabble that are attacking us?'"—*Alison*.
† Dhoondiah Waugh.

same system of quick but cautious movement—the seizure of momentary advantage in attack, were not as clearly demonstrated in the suppression of the robber horde, as when he defeated his scientific opponent* at Salamanca, or, by beautiful combinations, achieved his triumph at Vittoria? To compare events like these may appear preposterous; but let it be remembered, that intuitive ability and military tact may be as fully exhibited in bringing off a picket when endangered, as in conducting the retreat of a division.

In Wellesley's earlier successes, two circumstances connected with them strike us as being most remarkable—the enormous masses of organized men over whom his triumphs were achieved, and the scanty means with which these brilliant victories were effected. Small as the latter were, in examining the proportionate strength of his armies, his British soldiers did not exceed a fourth of the whole; and with native troops—Mussulman opposed to Mussulman—Scindiah was routed at Assye, and Gawilghur, esteemed hitherto impregnable, carried by assault. Nothing can afford a stronger proof of that moral effect which superior intelligence exercises over uncultivated qualities in producing their development. Commanded entirely by British officers, the Indian army, in efficiency, was scarcely second to any. In the field, the sepoy soldier emulated his European associates in gallantry and discipline; and in the camp, he far exceeded them in sobriety and general good conduct. In danger, the Hindu exhibited a calm resolution, which no reverses could overturn—his fidelity was unbounded—his loyalty not to be shaken—want and suffering could never induce him to desert his officers—and death alone detached him from those colours, which, whether in victory or defeat, he regarded with a devotion that bordered on idolatry. His character united opposites; for with a disposition imbued with the mildness of woman, he combined the indomitable courage of a hero. Many instances could be adduced to show that in some of the best requisites of a soldier, “the

* Marshal Marmont.

Indian auxiliary might serve as a model to every service in Europe;" and that when circumstances required it, he was willing to seal his loyalty with his life, and abandon every thing but his faith.

In the record of an Indian siege, it is stated, that "on one occasion, when the provisions of a garrison were very low, and a surrender in consequence appeared unavoidable, the Hindoo soldiers entreated their commander to allow them to boil their rice, the only food left for the whole garrison. "Your English soldiers," said they, "can eat from our hands, though we cannot eat from theirs; we will allow them as their share every grain of the rice, and subsist ourselves by drinking the water in which it has been boiled."

A still more striking trait of the deep affection a Hindu soldier feels for his European comrade is recorded. When the remnant of Baily's army were delivered up by that truculent monster, Tippoo Suldaun, they were marched across the country to Madras, a distance of four hundred miles. "During the march, the utmost pains were taken by Tippoo's guards to keep the Hindoo privates separate from their European officers, in the hope that their fidelity might yet sink under the hardships to which they were exposed, but in vain; and not only did they all remain true to their colours, but swam the tanks and rivers by which they were separated from the officers during the night, bringing them all they could save from their little pittance; "for we," they said, "can live on anything, but you require beef and mutton."*

The fidelity of the Hindu soldier was never to be shaken, and the strongest human tie, kindred or affinity, could never swerve the sepoy from his duty. On the occasion of a native revolt, "a battalion of the 27th native infantry, with four hundred Rohilla horse recently embodied, were all that could be brought against the insurgents, who were

* Williams's Indian Army—Martin.

above twelve thousand strong. They continued to resist till two thousand were slain, and although many of them were their relations and neighbours, and their priest advanced and invoked them to join their natural friends, only one man was found wanting to his duty, and he was immediately put to death by his comrades, who throughout maintained the most unshaken fidelity and courage." *

We have but lightly sketched the earlier career of Wellesley in the East, and shown that in India those germinations first appeared, which afterwards produced a rich and glorious harvest. With him the opening promises of celebrity were amply realized hereafter—the workings of the master mind were readily discerned—and in his first exploits, there is a brightness of conception, a boldness in execution, that warrants the fullest comparison in martial daring, between the conqueror of Lodi and the victor of Assye. The future development of this great man's character, is so ably delineated by a living author,† that we do not hesitate in extracting this admirable summary, which, as an historic sketch, has seldom been surpassed.

"The brilliancy of his course is well known; an unbroken series of triumphs from Vimiera to Toulouse; the entire expulsion of the French from the Peninsula; the planting of the British standard in the heart of France; the successive defeat of those veteran marshals who had so long conquered in every country of Europe; the overthrow of Waterloo; the hurling of Napoleon from his throne; and the termination in one day, of the military empire founded on twenty years of conquest. But these results, great and imperishable as they are, convey no adequate idea, either of the difficulties with which Wellington had to contend, or of the merit due to his transcendent exertions. With an army seldom superior in number to a single corps of the French marshal's; with troops dispirited by recent disaster, and wholly unaided by practical experience; without any compulsory law to recruit his ranks, or any strong national

* Malcolm.

† Alison.

passion for war to supply its want—he was called on to combat successively vast armies, composed, in great part, of veteran soldiers—perpetually filled by the terrible powers of the conscription—headed by chiefs who, risen from the ranks, and practically acquainted with the duties of war in all its grades, had fought their way from the grenadier's musket to the marshal's baton, and were followed by men who, trained in the same school, were animated by the same ambition.* Still more, he was the General of a nation in which the chivalrous and mercantile qualities are strongly blended together; which, justly proud of its historic glory, is unreasonably jealous of its military expenditure; which, covetous beyond measure of warlike renown, is ruinously impatient of pacific preparation; which starves its establishment when danger is over, and yet frets at defeat when its terrors are present; which dreams in war of Cressy and Agincourt, and ruminates in peace on economic reduction. He combated at the head of an alliance formed of heterogeneous states, composed of discordant materials, in which ancient animosities and religious divisions were imperfectly suppressed by recent fervour or present danger; in which corruption often paralyzed the arm of patriotism, and jealousy withheld the resources of power. He acted under the direction of a ministry which, albeit zealous and active, was alike inexperienced in hostility, and unskilled in combinations; in presence of an opposition, which, powerful in eloquence, supported by faction, was prejudiced against the war, and indefatigable to arrest it; for the interests of a people who, although ardent in the cause, and enthusiastic in its support, were impatient of disaster and prone to

* "The organization of Napoleon's army was simple, the administrations vigorous, the manipulations well contrived. The French officers, accustomed to success, were bold and enterprising, of great reputation, and feared accordingly. By a combination of discipline and moral excitement, admirably adapted to the mixed nature of his troops, the Emperor had created a power that appeared to be resistless, and, in truth, it would have been so, if applied to one great object at a time; but this the ambition of the man, or rather, the force of circumstances, would not permit."—*Napier*.

depression, and whose military resources, how great soever, were dissipated in the protection of a colonial empire which encircled the earth."

"Capable, when the occasion required, or opportunity was afforded, of the most daring enterprises, he was yet cautious and wary in his general conduct; prodigal of his own labour, regardless of his own person, he was avaricious only of the blood of his soldiers; endowed by nature with an indomitable soul, a constitution of iron, he possessed that tenacity of purpose and indefatigable activity, which is ever necessary to great achievements; prudent in council, sagacious in design, he was yet prompt and decided in action; no general ever revolved the probable dangers of an enterprise more anxiously before undertaking it—none possessed in a higher degree the eagle eye, the arm of steel, necessary to carry it into execution. By the steady application of these rare qualities, he was enabled to raise the British military force from an unworthy state of depression to an unparalleled pitch of glory: to educate, in presence of the enemy, not only his soldiers in the field, but his rulers in the cabinet; to silence, by avoiding disaster, the clamour of his enemies; to strengthen by progressive success the ascendancy of his friends; to augment, by the exhibition of its results, the energy of the government; to rouse, by deeds of glory, the enthusiasm of the people. Skilfully seizing the opportunity of victory, he studiously avoided the chances of defeat; aware that a single disaster would at once endanger his prospects, discourage his countrymen, and strengthen his opponents, he was content to forego many opportunities of earning fame, and stifle many desires to grasp at glory; magnanimously checking the aspirations of genius, he trusted for ultimate success rather to perseverance in a wise, than audacity in a daring course. He thus succeeded, during six successive campaigns, with a comparatively inconsiderable army, in maintaining his ground against the vast and veteran forces of Napoleon, in defeating successively all his

marshals, and baffling successively all his enterprises, and finally rousing such an enthusiastic spirit in the British empire, as enabled its government to put forth its immense resources on a scale worthy of its present greatness and renown, and terminate a contest of twenty years, by planting the English standard on the walls of Paris."



CHAPTER XIII.

EXPEDITION TO HANOVER—MAJOR-GENERAL WELLESLEY APPOINTED TO A COMMAND—OBTAINS THE 33D REGIMENT—HIS MARRIAGE—MARQUESS WELLESLEY'S INDIAN ADMINISTRATION ATTACKED—SKETCH OF HIS GOVERNMENT—MR. PAULL—PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY—MARQUESS WELLESLEY HONOURABLY ACQUITTED—SIR ARTHUR APPOINTED CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND—ASSUMES HIS DUTIES—DANISH EXPEDITION—ARMY LANDS—COPENHAGEN INVESTED—GENERAL WELLESLEY DETACHED AGAINST A DANISH CORPS—ENGAGES AND DEFEATS IT—SIEGE PRESSED—BOMBARDMENT AND SURRENDER OF THE CITY—RETURN OF THE EXPEDITION—REMARKS.

IMMEDIATELY on his return to England, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to a staff command. The British Government, previous to his arrival from the East, had determined to effect a diversion on the continent, and an expedition had been accordingly prepared, and placed under the command of Lord Cathcart. It sailed on the 4th of November from the Downs, under the temporary orders of General Don. Lord Cathcart assumed the command on the 17th, but the disastrous consequences which resulted from the defeat of Austerlitz, rendered it advisable to abandon the attempt, and the troops were accordingly recalled to England. On the return of the expedition from Hanover, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to command the troops stationed at Hastings, in Sussex—to his new duties he applied himself with assiduity—and the

fine order and superior discipline of his brigade, showed how contentedly, after commanding an army in the field, he turned his attention to the humbler services his country had now required from him.

The Marquess Cornwallis, who succeeded the Marquess Wellesley in the government of India, held it but a short time, dying on the 5th of October, 1805, at Ghazy-poor, near Benares. By his demise, the Colonelcy of the 33d Regiment became vacant, and Major-General Wellesley succeeded the Marquess, having been Lieutenant-Colonel of that corps for nearly thirteen years.

Shortly before he obtained his regiment, the Major-General was returned to parliament for the borough of Rye. On the 10th of April, 1806, he married Catherine, third daughter of Edward Michael, second Earl of Longford.* Two sons were the issue of this marriage,—Arthur, Marquess of Douro, born the 3d of February, 1807, in Harley-street, London; and Charles, born at the Chief Secretary's lodge, near Dublin, 16th January, 1808. Both entered the army at an early age, and both have attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

Before he had been long seated in the lower house, Sir Arthur Wellesley was obliged to come forward in his place, to defend his brother, the Marquess Wellesley, who was most virulently and perseveringly assailed. Few statesmen had deserved better of their country, and the motives and actions of none were more foully impugned, nor more falsely misrepresented. His appointment to the Indian government had, in a great degree, assisted in preserving her Eastern possessions to Great Britain. On the Marquess Wellesley's arrival at Calcutta, nothing could have been more deplorable than the state of affairs. The

* The Pakenham family is extremely ancient, and derive their descent from William de Pakenham, who was a judge in the reign of Edward I. Their immediate ancestor, Sir Edward Pakenham, Knt., accompanied his cousin, Sir Henry Sidney, to Ireland, in 1576, when Sir Henry assumed the government of the kingdom as Lord Lieutenant.

military establishments were on the lowest scale, and the treasury all but bankrupt. At Madras, an army of fifteen thousand men could with the greatest difficulty be collected, and that small force had neither siege stores nor field equipage; and had they possessed them, they lacked means of transport to have rendered them effective. The fortresses were unprovisioned, and the credit of the presidency so low, that eight per cent. paper had sunk to a discount of twenty. At that momentous time, when the existence of British dominion in the East was questioned by men, whom events, not fear, had rendered justly apprehensive, Lord Mornington arrived to resuscitate the dying energies of Government, and re-establish English dominion. Difficulties from which others would have shrunk, were by him resolutely grappled and overcome. Gradually the military power of the Company was restored, financial embarrassment removed, and by boldly assuming the lead in diplomacy, he speedily acquired the command. "All classes, both at home and abroad, rapidly discovered the character of the man with whom they were now brought in contact; British patriotism was roused by the clear indications which were afforded of capacity at the heart of affairs; Asiatic hostility sank before the ascendant of European talent; Indian jealousy, before the force of English courage. The army was rapidly augmented; the frontier fortresses were armed and victualled; the bullock service and commissariat put on a respectable footing; a powerful battering train was collected at Madras; and voluntary subscriptions, on a magnificent scale, at all the three presidencies, bespoke at once the public spirit and opulence of the inhabitants."

"The administration of Marquis Wellesley exceeds in brilliancy and importance of the events by which it was distinguished, any recorded in British history. In the space of seven years, triumphs were then accumulated, which would have given lustre to an ordinary century of success. Within that short period, a formidable French force, fourteen thousand strong, which had well nigh sub-

verted the British influence at the court of their ancient ally the Nizam, was disarmed; the empire of Tippoo Sultaun, which has so often brought it to the brink of ruin, subverted; the Peshwah restored to his hereditary rank in the Marhatta confederacy, and secured to the British interests; the power of Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar crushed, and their thrones preserved only by the magnanimity of the conqueror; the vast force, organized by French officers, of forty thousand disciplined soldiers on the banks of the Jumna, totally destroyed, and Holkar himself, with the last remnant of the Marhatta horse, driven entirely from his dominions, and compelled, a needy suppliant, to sue for peace, and owe the restitution of his provinces to the perhaps misplaced generosity of the conqueror. He added provinces to the British empire in India, during his short administration, larger than the kingdom of France; extended its influence over the territories more extensive than the whole of Germany; and successively vanquished four fierce and warlike nations, who could bring three hundred thousand men into the field.

“ From maintaining with difficulty a precarious footing at the foot of the Ghauts, and on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, the British Government was seated on the throne of Mysore; from resting only on the banks of the Ganges, it had come to spread its influence to the Indus and the Himalaya; it numbered among its provincial towns Delhi and Agra, the once splendid capitals of Hindustan; among its stipendiary princes, the Sultaun of Mysore and the descendants of the imperial house of Timour.”*

Yet after a government of seven years, commencing under such unpromising auspices, and closing with such glorious results, Lord Wellesley's conduct, when in India, was impugned as being both tyrannical and corrupt. Mr. Paull,† a gentleman recently returned from the East, came forward

* Alison, vol. vii. p. 7.

† Mr. Paull was a native of Perth, and had been originally apprenticed to his father, who carried on the business of a tailor in that city.

in the House of Commons, as the Marquess Wellesley's accuser; and in the latter end of 1805 obtained orders for the production of various papers to substantiate his charges. Early in the following session, he resumed the subject; and, though the change of ministry, which soon after followed, was fatal to his hopes of active or strenuous support from any of the great parties in parliament, he continued to urge his accusation with unabated perseverance. The firmness he displayed in this business, upon several trying occasions, might have entitled him to praise, had it been accompanied with judgment, temper, or discretion. But Mr. Paull was eminently deficient in these qualifications; nor was he possessed of the parliamentary knowledge, personal consideration and ability, or political weight, necessary to give to his accusations their due effect against an adversary, so formidable by his credit and connexions as the object of his attack. The rashness and impatience of his temper gave advantages to his opponents in the House of Commons, of which they disdained not to avail themselves, while his unacquaintance with the forms and rules of procedure in parliament, and his rambling digressive oratory, involved him at once in difficulties, and exposed him frequently to ridicule.*

Mr. Paull, no doubt, had to contend with no small difficulties in procuring a patient and impartial hearing of his case. Discussions on India had for many years met with a most inattentive and reluctant auditory in the House of Commons; and no one who recollected, or had taken part in the trial of Mr. Hastings, was disposed to embark in the intricacies and difficulties of another Indian impeachment. The partisans of Lord Wellesley, and admirers of his administration of India, were numerous and powerful in the House of Commons, and eager and even violent in his defence. The whole body of the ex-ministers and their adherents, and two of the three parties united in the new administration, were openly and avowedly his friends, and took every opportunity of declaring their opinion, that his

* Parliamentary Digest, 1806.

conduct was not only undeserving of censure, but meriting the warmest thanks of his country. The East India Directors were, indeed, decidedly hostile to his system of government, to which they imputed all the pecuniary difficulties of the Company's situation; but, they were averse to his impeachment, either because they thought his conduct did not afford grounds for such a procedure against him; or because they despaired of success in it, and deprecated an attempt, which, if it failed, might raise him again to power.

To any discussion of Indian affairs, Mr. Fox was decidedly averse. Avowedly opposed to the principles which guided the Wellesley government, he doubted whether any acts had been committed that warranted an impeachment; and he declined, on other and more delicate grounds, to take an active part against a person under accusation. Similar feelings influenced Mr. Francis and Mr. George Johnstone, the latter a personal friend of Mr. Paull, and both, gentlemen conversant with Indian affairs, and politically hostile to Lord Wellesley.

Mr. Paull was, therefore, left during a great part of that session, without any zealous or steady supporter except Lord Folkstone. Insomuch that, having imprudently brought forward, in the absence of that nobleman, his first charge against Lord Wellesley, not only without any documents to support it, but without securing any person to second his motion for taking it into farther consideration; the house had actually to wait in suspense for several minutes, till Sir William Geary rose, and declaring at the same time that he had no decided opinion upon the subject, observed that he only seconded the motion, because he thought a question of that importance should not be allowed to fall to the ground.* But this

* The Governor-General was accused of having appropriated a million and a half sterling for certain unjust purposes without the sanction of the Company—of lavishing 25,000*l.* annually of the public money upon display and ostentation—and of increasing the debt, which stood at 11,033,648*l.* at his appointment, to 31,000,000*l.*, to which it had amounted, when he retired from the direction of affairs.

defenceless, unprotected state, in which Mr. Paull stood forward, alone and insulated, without assistance or encouragement, as the accuser of a nobleman, whose victorious administration had reflected so much splendour on the British empire in India, was ultimately most favourable to his cause. Of the persons who were thus induced to support him with the greatest warmth and steadiness, the principal were Mr. Windham, Dr. Laurence, Lord A. Hamilton, the Marquess Douglass, Mr. Martin (of Tewkesbury), and the Solicitor-General—other members occasionally lent him their assistance.

For ten months Mr. Paull was employed in moving for papers on Oude, Bhurtpore, Surat, Furruckabad, and other subjects connected with his intended impeachment; and when the motion was brought forward, he was saved from the mortification of seeing it fall to the ground for want of a seconder, by the interference of Sir William Geary. A debate followed on the course to be taken by the house, in the extraordinary situation in which it was placed, of being called upon to entertain a criminal charge, without a particle of evidence in support of it. Mr. Paull at length withdrew his motion for taking the charge into consideration; and, next day (April 23d), the order for printing it, which had been inadvertently passed, was discharged on the motion of Mr. Sheridan. Various attempts were afterwards made by Mr. Paull to have this charge printed by order of the house, but without success.

The Oude charge, which was next brought forward, was laid on the table of the House of Commons on the 28th of May, read, and ordered to be printed. This charge recited numberless acts of tyranny, oppression, fraud, hypocrisy, and illegal violence, practised against the Nabob of Oude by order of Lord Wellesley.

Mr. Paull* was not permitted to witness the termination

* No man sunk faster into insignificance than the ex-member for Westminster. Commercial disappointments followed fast upon his rejection by his former constituency. His duel with Sir Francis Burdett, in which both parties

of the parliamentary ordeal to which he had submitted the conduct of Lord Wellesley's government in the East. He was rejected by the electors of Westminster, and never obtained a seat again in St. Stephen's. The charges remained for a long time in abeyance, and it was generally supposed that the question was at rest.

On the 22d of February, 1808, however, Lord Folkstone having moved that the Oude papers should be taken into consideration, the debate turned on whether the house should decide at once upon the charges, or "that the evidence should be sent to a Committee, to return a digested report of it to the house."* Sir Arthur Wellesley urged an immediate decision. He said that it "was for the house to decide, what mode of proceeding would best suit its own convenience and the ends of justice; but he contended that it had been always asked, and it was the only thing that was asked, on the part of the noble Marquess, that the case should be brought to as speedy a decision, as a regard to justice and fair inquiry would allow. The propriety of this principle had been laid down and enforced by the highest authority on all sides of the house, and among others, by an honourable gentleman now no more, (Mr. Fox,) whose opinion would weigh very much with the gentlemen on the other side. He did not suppose that every member had read the papers word for word; but he was satisfied there were very few who had not read them sufficiently, to enable them to give a conscientious vote. All that he asked now was, what he had asked before—as speedy a decision as the house in its sense of justice could admit."

After a lengthened debate, it was determined that the charges should be proceeded with; and on the 9th of March, Lord Folkstone brought them before the house. A long and interesting debate resulted, and it was continued

were wounded, seemed a last effort at notoriety; and already half-forgotten, he died by his own hand, on the 15th of April, 1808.

* Parliamentary Digest.

by adjournment until the 17th, when, after the previous question had been carried by an immense majority, Sir John Anstruther moved, "That it appears to this house that Marquess Wellesley, in his arrangements in the province of Oude, was actuated by an ardent zeal for the service of his country, and an anxious desire to promote the safety, interests, and prosperity, of the British empire in India."

On this motion the house divided :—

For the motion	180
Against it	29
<hr/>	
Majority	151

This topic was once more brought forward in a different shape, but with the same view of censuring and criminating the Marquess, by Lord Archibald Hamilton. It met the fate that had attended the former efforts to impugn Lord Wellesley's character; and established more strongly in public opinion that firmness and ability, which, under very trying circumstances, had been evinced in his Indian government.

In 1807, when the Portland administration came into power, the Duke of Bedford was removed from the Irish Lieutenancy, and the Duke of Richmond appointed his successor. The important situation of Chief Secretary having been offered to Sir Arthur Wellesley, he accepted it conditionally, "that it should not impede nor interfere with his military promotion or pursuits"*—and repairing immediately to Dublin Castle, he undertook the duties of his laborious and responsible appointment. Many of his old friends, with whom he had been intimate before he quitted Ireland for the East, hailed his return with delight. The same unassuming carriage, the same facility of approach, was then as characteristic of the successful General,

* Sir Jonah Barrington.

as it had been of the young aid-de-camp in 1792, then the *attaché* of a court, and one who had only "heard of battles." "He was in all material traits still Sir Arthur Wellesley, but it was Sir Arthur Wellesley judiciously improved."*

The state of Ireland, when the new Secretary revisited his native land, was exceedingly disturbed, and it was deemed advisable for the security of the kingdom, to arm the executive with great additional powers. With that intent the Insurrection Bill was framed; and the introduction of this strong measure met with considerable opposition, for, if confided to unsafe or dishonest hands, its workings would be most dangerous, and the rights and liberties of all might be materially endangered. But these extended powers with which the Irish Secretary was entrusted, appear to have been employed with singular moderation—for one politically opposed to the Government of that day observed, "that the public acts of the Irish executive, were generally distinguished by impartiality and good sense."*

The organization of an efficient police was another measure that emanated from Sir Arthur. The old system was full of abuse, and it was "calculated to afford protection to none but malefactors." Though strongly opposed, the Irish Secretary succeeded in introducing a measure, by which the services of a body of men, calculated to preserve the lives and properties of the citizens, were permanently obtained. Experience has proved how admirable this change was, from what, for years, "had been a nuisance and a disgrace to the Irish metropolis."

In the spring of 1807, an expedition, which has been reprobated for its injustice by one party, and praised for its salutary results by another, was directed to be got in readiness, with all possible despatch. Its operations were intended against the Danish capital, and its object was to

* Sir Jonah Barrington.

obtain a temporary possession of a formidable fleet, then lying in the basins of Copenhagen.

Denmark had hitherto preserved a perfect neutrality,—her weakness and locality required it,—and Great Britain had tacitly acquiesced in permitting this feeble state to rest in safety, amidst the convulsion of all around, only requiring from the Crown Prince an assurance, that a strict impartiality should be maintained towards all the belligerents. Notwithstanding her acknowledged neutrality, Murat crossed her frontier most unceremoniously in pursuit of a Prussian corps under Blucher, and in an affair that resulted between the advanced posts of the French and Danish armies, some lives were lost. A very trifling explanation from Murat satisfied the Crown Prince,—the insult was overlooked,—and it was whispered that the Danish government might possibly submit to French aggression even on a greater scale. The chief source of apprehension was the navy,—and the facility with which Denmark submitted to Napoleon's decree against British commerce, induced many to believe, that a demand of the possession of her fleet and dock-yards, might be acceded to without any very serious opposition. Other circumstances made the neutrality of Denmark rather questionable. The Crown Prince was particularly anxious to retain his continental possessions, and these lay completely at the mercy of Napoleon. A French party was strong about his court—and the Emperor's threat, it was supposed, had not been forgotten by this dependent sovereign,—“Let that little prince take care, or I shall teach him how to act.”

The treaty of Tilsit occasioned in England additional apprehension. It was determined that the navy of Denmark should not be added to the enormous resources of Napoleon, and with immense despatch and profound secrecy, the means were completed for obtaining its possession. A powerful fleet, accompanied by an army of 20,000 men, were got ready for service; the former commanded by Admiral Gambier

the latter by Lord Cathcart. The objects of the expedition were kept so secret, that the greater portion of the armament was at sea, before its destination was suspected. On the 4th of August, the fleet anchored between the Castle of Cronenberg and the capital; and on the 12th, the German legion joined from Pomerania.

Negotiation was unsuccessfully tried; and on the 15th Mr. Jackson, the British *chargé d'affaires*, announced that any accommodation which might remove the causes of England's suspicion was hopeless. The army was consequently landed between Elsineur and Copenhagen on the 16th, and the fleet brought closer to the city.

The army advanced in three columns, slightly annoyed by the fire of the Danish gun-boats, and by detached parties of troops, who were, however, repelled wherever they attempted to attack. On the 19th, the post of Fredericksverk was surprised, and its garrison of eight hundred and fifty men made prisoners—and on the 24th, the right wing invested the city, and commenced erecting mortar batteries for its bombardment.

The Danes had, in the mean time, been collecting their regular troops and militia under General Carstenkiold, and he had been reinforced by four regiments commanded by General Ozhoken. It became necessary that this force should be dispersed, and General Wellesley, with Generals Linsengen and Stuart, and a corps of sufficient strength, was detached by Lord Cathcart to effect this service. In this the Major-General succeeded—and the particulars of the affair are contained in the annexed despatch:—

“MY LORD,

“*Kioe, August 19th, 1807.*

“According to the intention which I announced to your Lordship on the morning of the 27th, I moved to Rosekild Kioe, and placed Colonel Reden at Vellensbrek, and General Linsengen marched yesterday morning to Rosekild. By these different movements his force became the right instead of the left.

“ Having had reason to believe that the enemy still remained at Kioge, I determined to attack him this day. I settled with General Linsengen, that he should cross the Kioge rivulet at Little Salbye, and turn the enemy's left flank, while I should move along the sea road towards Kioge, and attack him in front.

“ Both divisions broke up this morning, and marched according to the plan concerted. Upon my approach to Kioge, I found the enemy in force on the north side of the town and rivulet, and they commenced a cannonade upon the patrols of hussars in my front; they had three or four regular batteries formed in one line, with cavalry on both flanks, and apparently a large body beyond the town and rivulet. At the time agreed upon with General Linsengen, I formed my infantry in one line, with the left to the sea, having the two squadrons of hussars upon the right. There had been some appearance of a movement by the enemy to their left, and I had not had any communication with General Linsengen, and was not certain that he had passed the rivulet; I therefore thought it proper to make the attack in an echelon of battalions from the left; the whole covered by the first battalion of the 95th regiment, and by the fire of our artillery.

“ It fell to the lot of the 92d regiment to lead this attack; and they performed their part in the most exemplary manner, and were equally well supported by the 52d and 3d.

“ The enemy soon retired to an entrenchment which they had formed in front of a camp on the north side of Kioge, and they made a disposition of their cavalry upon the sands to charge the 92d in flank, while they should attack this entrenchment. This disposition obliged me to move Colonel Reden's hussars from the right to the left flank, and to throw the 43d into a second line; and then the 92d carried the entrenchment, and forced the enemy to retreat into the town in disorder. They were followed immediately in the most gallant style by Colonel Reden and his hussars, and by the first battalion, 95th regiment, and afterwards by the

whole of the infantry of my corps. Upon crossing the rivulet, we found General Linsengen's corps upon our right flank ; and the whole joined in pursuit of the enemy.

“ Major-General Ozhoken, the second in command ; who had joined the army with four battalions last night from the southern island, attempted to stand in the village of Hersolge ; but he was attacked briskly by the hussars, with detachments of which were Captain Blaquiere and Captain Cotton of the staff, and by a small detachment of the first of the 95th ; and he was compelled to surrender, with Count Wedel Jarisburg, several other officers, and 400 men.

“ The loss of the enemy has been very great ; many have fallen, and there are nearly sixty officers and 1100 men prisoners. In their flight they have thrown away their arms and clothing, and many stands of the former have fallen into our hands. I believe we have taken ten pieces of cannon ; but I have not yet received all the reports from the detachments employed in the pursuit of the enemy. I have not seen General Linsengen, as he is still out with his hussars, but I understood that the enemy had destroyed the bridges at Little Salbye, which was the cause of the delay of his operation upon the flank.

“ I cannot close this letter without expressing to your Lordship my sense of the good conduct of the troops ; all conducted themselves with the utmost steadiness.”

“ To Lieutenant-General Lord Cathcart, K.T.”

Immediately after the dispersion of the Danish corps, the Major-General proceeded into the interior, to overawe in the country, any attempt which might be made to excite a popular rising. In this service he succeeded, and was recalled to assist at the capitulation of the city.*

* “ This basis (the surrender of the fleet) having been admitted by a subsequent letter, on the 6th, Major-General Sir A. Wellesley, whom I had sent for, for this purpose, from his command in the country, where he had distinguished himself in a manner so honourable to himself, and so advantageous to

The siege was now vigorously pressed—and the works, unchecked in their progress by the feeble resistance made by the musketry of the city, and the fire upon the praams and gun-boats, were completed. After summoning the garrison, on the evening of the 2d the batteries and bomb vessels opened, and the town was speedily in flames. On the night of the 3d, the fire slackened, to allow General Peyman an opportunity to capitulate—but the Danish Governor was obstinate, and on the evening of the 4th, the bombardment recommenced more furiously than ever. On the 5th, the place was everywhere wrapped in flames, and the destruction of the town appeared inevitable. The white flag was then displayed; and after a short delay an armistice was concluded. The great object of the expedition was thus obtained, for the fleet and naval stores were yielded to the conquerors.*

The loss sustained by the British was comparatively trifling. Of the land forces, two hundred were rendered *hors de combat*, while the casualties of the navy scarcely exceeded fifty. The fine fleet and immense quantity of naval stores contained in the dock-yards at Copenhagen, would have afforded Napoleon ample means for effecting his threatened descent upon the coasts of England or Ireland. Sixteen sail of the line, nine frigates, fourteen sloops, and many smaller vessels, were brought away. The

the public, was appointed, with Sir Home Popham and Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, to prepare and sign articles of capitulation: and those officers having insisted on proceeding immediately to business, the capitulation was drawn up on the night between the 6th and 7th.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"Viscount Castlereagh."

"CATHCART."

* The Crown Prince had received, in the year 1805, an English-built frigate, a present from his Britannic Majesty. When the English carried away the Danish navy, this vessel was left in the dock-yard, as a mark of respect at once to the donor and his Royal Highness. On his return to Copenhagen, the Crown Prince ordered the frigate to be manned with sixteen British sailors, who had been taken prisoners; furnished with necessary provisions, and sent back to England.

ships were laden with masts, spars, and cordage; besides which ninety transports were filled with naval stores; and of five vessels on the stocks, two were taken to pieces and brought to England, and the remainder destroyed. On the 13th, according to treaty, the embarkation of the troops commenced; on the 18th it was completed; and on the 20th, the last English guard in the citadel was relieved by a Danish detachment, and the fleet and army quitted the shores of Zealand.*

* Lord Roslyn had brought with him a favourite mare, which he rode occasionally during the operations in Zealand. At the time, she proved in foal, and after her safe return to England, a colt was the produce. The colt was named "Copenhagen;" and that horse carried the Duke of Wellington throughout the glorious day of Waterloo. Full of honour and of years, Copenhagen died in 1835, at Strathfieldsaye.



CHAPTER XIV.

DANISH FLEET ARRIVES IN ENGLAND—REMARKS ON THE BOMBARDMENT OF COPENHAGEN—THANKS OF THE HOUSE RETURNED TO GENERAL WELLESLEY—HIS REPLY—RESUMES HIS DUTIES AS IRISH SECRETARY—OFFICIAL CHARACTER—OBTAINS THE COMMAND OF THE EXPEDITION ASSEMBLED AT CORK—OFFICIAL LETTERS FROM THE DUKE OF YORK AND LORD CASTLEREAGH—EXPEDITION SAILS—GENERAL WELLESLEY PRECEDES IT TO CORUNNA.

WITH the exception of some trifling casualties, the Danish fleet reached the British ports in safety; and the cause of a great national alarm was happily removed. That the service had been ably executed, all parties in the state agreed; that sound policy—that which rests on self-protection—required that Denmark should be deprived of the means of endangering Great Britain, was conceded. All admitted that Napoleon would have applied the naval resources of the Crown Prince against his island enemy without scruple; but it was contended, that England had imitated too closely the military philosophy of France, in which the leading principle inculcated that the end sanctified the means.

To devote a city to that horrible visitation to which Copenhagen was subjected, was certainly a fearful alternative; and could the Danish navy have been obtained by

lesser violence, its seizure would never have caused half the reprobation that it did. But assuredly, if the British commanders were to blame, the Danish executive were infinitely more culpable. For their stupid obstinacy there is no plea; for from blindly refusing to capitulate, nothing but domestic calamity could spring. There can be but one sentiment as to the imprudence and inhumanity of the Crown Prince, in permitting his troops to offer a hopeless resistance to the British arms, by which a crowded capital was exposed to all the horrors of a bombardment. To sanction this resistance, was as wanton in point of cruelty, as it was unnecessary in point of honour; especially as he did not participate in the danger himself. The destruction of houses and property, and the waste of the blood of his subjects, were not required to prove to the world the repugnance with which his fleet was surrendered, or the detestation with which he regarded the whole transaction. It would have been better manifested by a declaration of war against Great Britain, accompanied by a detail of the circumstances that produced it.

On the 28th of January Lord Castlereagh moved the thanks of the Commons, and Lord Hawkesbury those of the House of Lords, to Lord Cathcart and other Generals and commanding officers of the army and navy, for their recent services in the Baltic. After a long and spirited debate the motion was carried by a majority of eighty-one: and on the 1st of February, in the House of Commons, the Speaker, having returned the thanks to other general officers, members of the House, for their conduct at Copenhagen, thus particularized Major-General Sir Arthur Wellesley:—

“But I should indeed be wanting to the full expression of those sentiments which animate this House, and the whole country, if I forbore to notice that we are, on this day, crowning with our thanks one gallant officer, long since known to the gratitude of this House, who has long

trodden the paths of glory, whose genius and valour have already extended our fame and empire ; whose sword has been the terror of our distant enemies, and will not now be drawn in vain to defend the seat of empire itself, and the throne of his king. I am, Sir Arthur Wellesley, charged to deliver the thanks of this House to you ; and I do accordingly thank you, in the name of the Commons of the United Kingdom, for your zeal, intrepidity, and exertion, displayed in the various operations which were necessary for conducting the siege, and effecting the surrender of the navy and arsenal of Copenhagen."

Major-General the Hon. Sir Arthur Wellesley replied as follows :—

" Mr. Speaker,—I consider myself fortunate that I was employed by his Majesty on a service which this House has considered of such importance, as to have marked with its approbation the conduct of those officers and troops who have performed it. The honour which this House has conferred upon my honourable friends, and myself, is justly considered by the officers of the navy and army as the highest which this country can confer ; it is the object of the ambition of all who are employed in his Majesty's service ; and to obtain it has doubtless been the motive of many of those acts of valour and good conduct which have tended so eminently to the glory, and have advanced the prosperity and advantage of this country. I can assure the House that I am most sensible of the great honour which they have done me ; and I beg leave to take this opportunity of returning you, Sir, my thanks for the handsome terms, respecting myself, in which your kindness to me has induced you to convey the resolution of the House."*

On his return home, Sir Arthur Wellesley resumed his Irish secretaryship. Where party ran so high as it has unfortunately done in Ireland during the past century, it could not be expected, that the measures he introduced

* Parliamentary Proceedings, 1808.

would be satisfactory to all, or that he should not be violently opposed by those who differed from him in their political views, and subjected to the unpopularity that, more or less, occasionally attends the career of public men. His appointment of Mr. Giffard to the lucrative office of accountant-general, his opposition to Sir John Newport's motion for increasing the grant given by Government to the Roman-catholic College at Maynooth, and a bill he introduced for enforcing the residence of spiritual persons on their respective benefices, and for erecting churches and glebe houses in Ireland, caused his measures to be regarded with suspicion, and subjected him to a charge of illiberality. But he met these accusations in his place in the House with the firmness that might have been expected from a soldier and a statesman ; and repelled every charge, which could compromise his impartiality as a public man, or his tolerance as a private individual.

On a subsequent occasion, the sentiments of the honourable secretary regarding religious distinction, were more clearly explained. Patrick Duigenan, a doctor of laws, from having been originally a member of the Church of Rome, had not only protested against its errors and embraced Protestantism, but on every occasion, he expressed opinions on religious questions which were any thing but tolerant. Possessed of some talent and great industry, he obtained reputation as a civil lawyer, and in consequence was raised to the dignity of judge of the prerogative court, and afterwards created a privy councillor. This appointment gave deadly offence to the Roman-catholic party. It was considered by them rather as an insult to their body, than a mede of desert paid to individual merit ; and in consequence, a parliamentary inquiry was instituted, and copies of the correspondence which had passed between the Irish viceroy and his secretary were moved for and obtained. Sir Arthur Wellesley, in defending the appointment of the learned doctor, stated, that '*ex officio*' judges of the prerogative court were necessarily made members

of the privy council; for to it, much business connected with the Irish Church was submitted for review; and the assistance of a functionary conversant with ecclesiastical affairs was, therefore, absolutely indispensable. He admitted that the learned gentleman's zeal for the support of the Protestant Church might have been rather overstrained; and that was to be regretted. His own opinion was, that when a man was competent to perform **any** particular service to the state, "distinction in **religion** should be waived, and individual **acquirements** be employed to the furtherance of public **advantage**."

The manner in **which** the business of Sir Arthur Wellesley's department was carried on, appeared to have given **universal** satisfaction. A contemporary,* in alluding to his accepting office a second time, after the expedition to Copenhagen, makes this remark: "On his return, he recommenced his duty of secretary; and during his residence in Ireland in that capacity, I did not hear one complaint against any part of his conduct, either as a public or private man."

But the time had now arrived when the hero of Assye was required to serve his country in a sphere more suited to his talents. A considerable force had been collected at Cork in the spring of 1808; and public conjecture assigned it very opposite destinations. The general belief was that it was destined to act against the Spanish possessions in South America, and such was the original intention. Fortunately, another and more glorious scene of action was its destiny. Lieutenant-General Wellesley was selected for its command; and while a letter from the Duke of York conveyed the King's order for assuming the appointment, another despatch from Lord Castlereagh explained the objects generally, which Government had in view in sending, or holding in readiness, all their disposable troops in Britain, for service in the Peninsula.

* Sir Jonah Barrington.

" Horse Guards, 14th June, 1808.

" SIR,

" His Majesty having been graciously pleased to appoint you to the command of a detachment of his army, to be employed upon a particular service, I have to desire that you will be pleased to take the earliest opportunity to assume the command of this force, and carry into effect such instructions as you may receive from his Majesty's ministers.

" The force which his Majesty has been pleased to place under your command consists of the following corps :—

Royal Artillery	}	With Major-General Spencer.
Royal Staff Corps Detachment		
29th Foot		
32nd ditto . . 1st Battalion		
50th ditto . . . ditto		
82nd ditto . . . ditto	}	To proceed from Cork.
5th ditto . . . ditto		
9th ditto . . . ditto		
38th ditto . . . ditto		
40th ditto . . . ditto		
60th ditto . . 5th ditto	}	
71st ditto . . 1st ditto		
91st ditto . . . ditto		
95th four Companies		
4th Royal Veteran Battalion	}	

" And the Staff appointed to this force is composed as follows :—

Major-General Spencer.
 Major-General Hill.
 Major-General Ferguson.
 Brigadier-General Nightingale.
 Brigadier-General Fane.
 Brigadier-General Catlin Craufurd.

" On all subjects relating to your command, you will be pleased to correspond with me, and you will regularly communicate to me all military transactions in which you may be engaged, reporting to me all vacancies that may

occur in the troops under your command; and as the power of appointing to commissions is not vested in you, you will be pleased to recommend to me such officers as may appear to you most deserving of promotion, stating the special reasons, where such recommendations are not in the usual channel of seniority.

“As many of the regiments under your command have second battalions attached to them, and which remain in this country, it is necessary that I should acquaint you that the first battalions under your orders being composed exclusively of the senior officers of their respective ranks, such vacancies as may occur therein, by promotion or casualty, must unavoidably be supplied by officers from the second battalions, who will be ordered immediately to join, on such vacancies being made known to me.

“Should you have occasion to recommend any gentleman for an ensigncy, you will be pleased to make known his address, in order that, if his Majesty should be pleased to confirm the recommendation, he may be directed to join the corps immediately on his appointment.

“You will transmit, monthly, returns of the troops under your command to the Secretary at War, and to the Adjutant-General, for my information; and you will strictly adhere to his Majesty's regulations in regard to the pay, clothing, and appointments of the troops; and your special attention must necessarily be directed to their discipline, and to the interior economy of the different corps, which is so essential, not only to the comfort of the soldier, but to the preservation of his health, under every change of climate to which he may be exposed.

“Under the head of pay, I have to direct your attention to instructions of the Paymasters-General to their deputy, respecting the usual stoppages being deducted from the pay of the several staff-officers, and to which you are requested to give the most punctual attention.

“You will be vested with the usual powers of convening general courts-martial; upon which subject I have to ob-

serve, that, as great inconveniences have arisen to the service from officers commanding in foreign stations having permitted prisoners to return to England, prior to the proceedings and opinions of the court-martial having been submitted to the King, I have to request that, in all cases, where any person whatever may be tried by a general court-martial, and where your powers are not sufficient to enable you to decide finally upon the proceedings, opinion, and sentence of the court, that you do not permit the prisoner to return to England, until his Majesty's commands shall have been duly communicated to you through the proper channel for that purpose.

"I have likewise to acquaint you, that as many general officers, from the best motives, have taken upon themselves to commute sentences of capital punishment to transportation for a term of years, or for life, when it is found that no such power is delegated by his Majesty, and consequently, that the whole of the proceedings may be thereby rendered nugatory, it will be necessary that your particular attention should be given to the powers granted to you by his Majesty's warrant on this subject, in order to prevent you from inadvertently falling into a similar irregularity.

"It is particularly desirable that the officer, and the head of the Quartermaster-General's staff, should be directed to keep a journal, or other memorandum, descriptive of the movements of the troops, and occurrences in which they are engaged; as also, that he should take and collect plans of the harbours, positions, or fortified places, in which the troops may be, for the purpose of being transmitted to me, and lodged in the military dépôt.

"In all points where any question or doubt may arise, and in which you may be desirous of receiving further and more specific instructions, you will always find me ready to pay the earliest attention to your representations.

"I am, &c.

"Lieut.-General
"Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B."

"FREDERICK,
"Commander-in-Chief."

“Downing Street, June 30, 1808.

“SIR,

“The occupation of Spain and Portugal by the troops of France, and the entire usurpation of their respective governments by that power, has determined his Majesty to direct a corps of his troops, as stated in the margin, to be prepared for service, to be employed under your orders, in counteracting the designs of the enemy, and in affording to the Spanish and Portuguese nations every possible aid in throwing off the yoke of France.

“You will receive, enclosed, the communications which have been made by the deputies of the principality of Asturias, and the kingdom of Galicia, to his Majesty’s Government, together with the reply which his Majesty has directed to be made to their demand of assistance.

“I also enclose a statement of the supplies which have been already despatched to the port of Gijon, for the use of the people of Asturias.

“As the deputies from the above provinces do not desire the employment of any corps of his Majesty’s troops in that quarter of Spain, from whence they are immediately delegated, but have rather pressed, as calculated to operate a powerful diversion in their favour, the importance of directing the efforts of the British troops to the expulsion of the enemy from Portugal, that the insurrection against the French may thereby become general throughout that kingdom, as well as Spain, it is, therefore, deemed expedient that your attention should be immediately directed to that object.

“The difficulty of returning to the northward with a fleet of transports, at this season of the year, renders it expedient that you should, in the first instance, proceed with the armament under your orders off Cape Finisterre. You will, yourself, precede them in a fast-sailing frigate to Corunna, where you will have the best means of learning the actual state of things, both in Spain and Portugal; and of judging how far the corps, under your immediate

orders, either separately, or reinforced by Major-General Spencer's corps, can be considered as of sufficient strength to undertake an operation against the Tagus.

"If you should be of opinion, from the information you may receive, that the enterprise in question cannot be undertaken without waiting for reinforcements from home, you will communicate, confidentially, to the provisional government of Galicia, that it is material to the interests of the common cause, that your armament should be enabled to take an anchorage to the northward of the Tagus, till it can be supported by a further force from home; and you will make arrangements with them, for having permission to proceed with it to Vigo, where it is conceived it can remain with not less security than in the harbour of Ferrol, and from which it can proceed to the southward with more facility than from the latter port.

"In case you should go into Vigo, you will send orders to Major-General Spencer, to join you at that place, should he have arrived off the Tagus, in consequence of the enclosed orders; and you will also transmit home such information as may enable his Majesty's Ministers to take measures for supporting your corps from hence.

"With a view to the contingency of your force being deemed unequal to the operation, an additional corps of ten thousand men has been ordered to be prepared for service, and which, it is hoped, may be ready to proceed in about three weeks from the present time. I enclose such information as we are in possession of with respect to the enemy's force in Portugal; a considerable proportion of which is said to have been lately moved to Almeida, in the north-eastern frontier. You will no doubt be enabled to obtain more recent information at Corunna, in aid of which Lieutenant-Colonel Browne has been ordered to proceed to Oporto, and to meet you, with such intelligence as he can procure, off Cape Finisterre.

"An officer of engineers, acquainted with the defences of the Tagus, has also been sent off the Tagus to make

observations, and to prepare information for your consideration with respect to the execution of the proposed attack on the Tagus. The result of his inquiries he will be directed to transmit also to the rendezvous off Cape Finisterre, remaining himself off the Tagus till your arrival.

“You are authorized to give the most distinct assurances to the Spanish and Portuguese people, that his Majesty, in sending a force to their assistance, has no other object in view than to afford them the most unqualified and disinterested support; and in any arrangements that you may be called upon to make with either nation, in the prosecution of the common cause, you will act with the utmost liberality and confidence, and upon the principle that his Majesty’s endeavours are to be directed to aid the people of Spain and Portugal, in restoring and maintaining, against France, the independence and integrity of their respective monarchies.

“In the rapid succession in which events must be expected to follow each other, situated as Spain and Portugal now are, much must be left to your judgment and decision on the spot.

“His Majesty is graciously pleased to confide to you the fullest discretion to act according to circumstances, for the benefit of his service, and you may rely on your measures being favourably interpreted, and receiving the most cordial support.

“You will facilitate, as much as possible, communications between the respective provinces and colonies of Spain, and reconcile, by your good offices, any differences that may arise between them in the execution of the common purpose.

“Should any serious division of sentiment occur, with respect to the nature of the provisional government which is to act during the present interregnum, or with respect to the Prince in whose name the legal authority is considered as vested, by the captivity or abdication of certain branches of the royal family, you will avoid, as far as possible, taking

any part in such discussions, without the express authority of your Government.

"You will, however, impress upon the minds of persons in authority, that, consistently with the effectual assertion of their independence, they cannot possibly acknowledge the King or Prince of Asturias, as at present possessing any authority whatever, or consider any act done by them as valid, until they return within the country, and become absolutely free agents; and that they never can be considered free, so long as they shall be prevailed on to acquiesce in the continuance of French troops either in Spain or Portugal.

"The entire and absolute evacuation of the Peninsula, by the troops of France, being, after what has lately passed, the only security for Spanish independence, and the only basis upon which the Spanish nation should be prevailed upon to treat, or lay down their arms.

"I have the honour to, &c. &c.

"CASTLEREAGH."

"Lieutenant-General* Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B."

With his accustomed promptitude Lieutenant-General Wellesley prepared for an immediate departure. His new appointment was more germane to his feelings, than wasting the summer of his youth in the dull details of official correspondence. In writing to Major-General Hill, he says, "I rejoice extremely at the prospect I have before me of serving again with you, and I hope we shall have more to do than we had on the last occasion, on which we were together.

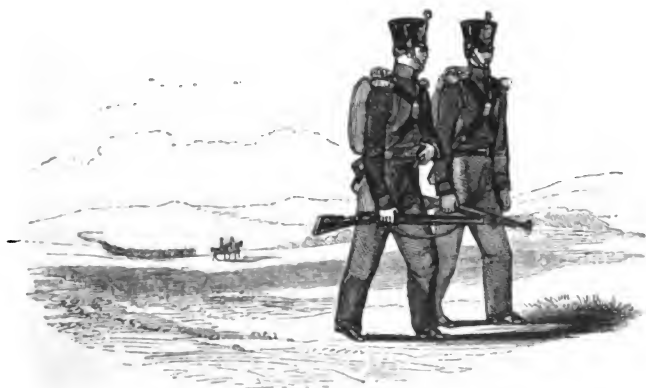
"I propose to leave town for Cork, as soon as I shall receive my instructions from London * * * *
Pray let me hear from you, and acquaint me with all your wants, and whether I can do any thing for you here. You will readily believe that I have plenty to do, in closing a Government in such a manner as that I may give it up,

* Lieutenant-General, 25th April, 1808.

and taking the command of a corps for service ; but I shall not fail to attend to whatever you may write to me.”*

On reaching Cork Sir Arthur Wellesley was delayed a few days waiting for transports, the 20th light dragoons, and horses for the artillery. On the evening of the 9th the embarkation was completed, but contrary winds prevented it from leaving the harbour. On the 12th, however, the whole got under weigh, and on the 13th were clear of the Irish land. Here, in obedience to orders previously received, Sir Arthur Wellesley parted company with the fleet, and leaving the Donegal, in which vessel he had embarked, sailed direct in the *Crocodile* frigate for Corunna, where he arrived on the 20th, and according to his instructions from Lord Castlereagh, he put himself into immediate communication with the Junta of Galicia.

* Wellington Despatches.



CHAPTER XV.

PENINSULAR WAR—NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE—STATE OF EUROPE—DESIGNS OF NAPOLEON—GODOY—ROYAL FAMILY OF SPAIN—ITS STATE—PORTUGAL INVADED—SPANISH AUXILIARY CORPS—BRITISH MINISTER QUITS LISBON—ARRIVAL OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET—JUNOT ADVANCES—STATE OF HIS ARMY ON ENTERING LISBON—FRENCH OPPRESSION—ITS EFFECTS—BAD CONDUCT OF THE SPANISH GENERAL—FRENCH ENTER SPAIN—APATHY OF THE SPANISH COURT—THEIR QUARRELS—RIOTS—CHARLES RESIGNS, AND FERDINAND ASSUMES THE CROWN—MURAT MARCHES ON MADRID—BEAUMARNOIS REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE FERDINAND—SWORD OF FRANCIS DELIVERED UP TO MURAT—PROCEEDINGS AT MADRID—FERDINAND SETS OUT FOR FRANCE—CHARLES, THE QUEEN, AND GODOY, FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE, AND ABANDON SPAIN.

“THE late war in the Peninsula will be memorable above all of modern times. It was no common war, of which a breach of treaty, an extension of frontier, a distant colony, or a disputed succession, serves as the cause or pretext. * * * It was for the life or death of national independence, national spirit, and of all those holy feelings which are comprehended in the love of our native land.”*

Napoleon Buonaparte, “the scourge and wonder of an age,” had raised a mighty empire on the ruins of a republic,—his power and glory were at their zenith,—the movements of his armies were but a march to victory,—half Europe was at his feet, and thrones and kings rose and fell at his dictation. With one solitary exception, all cowered before the magic of his name;† and while her

* Southey.

† “In England a superstition concerning Buonaparte was mingled with this womanish sensibility. They who had not lost sight of his enormities, doubted whether he were the Beast, whose number they contrived to discover in his name,

political horizon became every hour more heavily overcast, Great Britain maintained, with inflexible resolution, the attitude she had from the first assumed;—and though every banner beside her own, veiled its glories before the victorious eagles of the Corsican, the leopards of England were seen waving proudly

“Far as the breeze could bear, or billows foam.”

What Louis XIV. had dreamed, Napoleon had actually effected. “The Austrian Netherlands, and all the German states as far as the Rhine, were annexed to France, and the European powers who were most injured and endangered by this usurpation, acquiesced in it with hopeless submission. Beyond the Rhine the French were in possession of many strong places, which gave them access into the heart of Germany. Buonaparte was king of Italy, as well as emperor of France. One of his brothers had been made king of Holland, a second king of Naples, and a third king of Westphalia, all in immediate dependence upon him as the head and founder of the Napoleon dynasty.”

The Holy German Empire was dissolved, and those inferior states, once its component parts, were united as the Confederation of the Rhine, and bound to France by an offensive and defensive alliance, that made them, in point of fact, virtually the feudatories of Napoleon. Switzerland was under the avowed protection of France. “Prussia, beaten, humbled, and dismembered, seemed to exist only by his sufferance. Austria, after three struggles

or Antichrist himself. Others, whom he had in some degree conciliated by his various aggressions upon the papal power, forgave him his crimes, because the whore of Babylon happened to be among those whom he had plundered; they rather imagined him to be the man upon the White Horse. In this, however, they were all agreed, that Providence had appointed him for some great work; and it was an easy conclusion for those whose weak heads and warm imaginations looked no further, that it must be unavailing, if not impious, to oppose him.”—*Southey*.

against revolutionary France, each more lamentably mis-conducted and more disastrous than the last, divorced from the empire, despoiled of the Netherlands, the Brisgaw, the Frickthal, the Vorarlberg, the Tyrol, and all its Italian territories, had no other consolation in the ignominious peace to which it had been forced, than that of seeing the house of Brandenburg soon afterwards reduced to a state of greater humiliation. Denmark was in alliance with France; the government, rather than the nation, cooperating heartily with Buonaparte. Sweden, with an insane king and a discontented people, maintained against him a war which was little more than nominal. Russia, the only country which seemed secure in its distance, its strength, and the unanimity of its inhabitants,—the only continental state to which the rest of Europe might have looked as to a conservative power,—Russia appeared to be dazzled by Buonaparte's glory, duped by his insidious talents, and blindly subservient to his ambition. Spain was entirely subject to his control; its troops and its treasures were more at the disposal of the French government than of its own. Portugal had hitherto been suffered to remain neutral, because Buonaparte from time to time extorted large sums from the court as the price of its neutrality, and because the produce of the Spanish mines found their way safely through the British cruisers under the Portuguese flag. England alone perseveringly opposed the projects of the ambitious conqueror, and prevented the possibility of his accomplishing that scheme of universal dominion which, had it not been for her interference, he believed to be within his reach." *

It seemed that Europe had ceased to have the wish or the power to oppose his views; and men began to speculate as to what new designs the inordinate ambition of the soldier-king should be directed. Would he subjugate

* Southey.

Turkey; partition it and Greece among his satellites; and thus, safe from the thunders of a British fleet, secure a passage into Egypt, and eventually reach the heart of Hindustan? But the part of Charlemagne, and not that of Alexander, was to be enacted by the French Emperor. Spain and Portugal were the objects at which he aimed—one was corrupt, the other helpless—both he believed almost within his grasp—and in idea, he was already master of the Spanish Indies and Brazil.

The Prince of Peace, Don Manuel de Godoy, had risen from humble life, until, from being a subaltern in the Royal Guards, he became, through the infamous patronage of his abandoned queen, the favourite and minister of that weakest of monarchs, Charles IV. Nothing could exceed the disunion of the royal family; Godoy fanned the flame, and by the assistance of the queen of the Two Sicilies, and his own influence over a dotard king, the breach between Charles and his son, Ferdinand, Prince of the Asturias, who had recently lost his beautiful consort,* was rendered so deadly, as to preclude any hope of its ever being accommodated. Under the pernicious counsel of an intriguing churchman, the prince was induced to apply to the French emperor for protection, while the old king, in turn, charged his son with treasonable designs against a father's crown and mother's life. Both complainants were indirectly encouraged to believe, that Napoleon was inclined to favour them respectively; while profiting by the imbecility of the sire and son, the French ruler secretly made arrangements for the dismemberment of Portugal, and the extinction of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain.

* Ferdinand's first wife, a princess of the house of Naples, was equally distinguished for personal beauty and superior understanding, and consequently she became an object of jealousy with the infamous family to which she was unhappily allied. The courtiers caused a separation between her and her worthless husband, and finally removed her by poison, administered during child-birth by her own accoucheur. The scoundrel, unable to bear the stings of unavailing remorse, confessed his crime, and afterwards committed suicide.

The state of the latter kingdom was in every department ruinous. Its navy was annihilated—its army, a mere rabble—its finances were at the lowest ebb—and public credit, there was none.* The quarrel with England had swept the Spanish flag from the surface of the ocean—all was in confusion and insolvency—and all exhibited unequivocal symptoms of the approaching dissolution of the monarchy.

As a preliminary step towards the execution of his grand scheme for the subjugation of the Peninsula, Spain was duped into a secret treaty with France,† by which Portugal was to be partitioned, and the *élite* of the Spanish army, amounting to sixteen thousand men, under the Marquess Romana and General Gonzalo O'Ferral, placed at the disposal of Napoleon, and drafted to the north of Germany. The next step was to obtain military possession of Portugal, and, if possible, secure the persons of the Braganza family. To found a pretext for these iniquitous acts, the French and Spanish ambassadors communicated to the court of Lisbon Napoleon's demands, to which Portugal was desired to submit. Her ports must be closed against England—any subjects of that

* "The few soldiers that remained in the country were without pay or clothing, or even arms; and the officers, taken from the lowest classes, were not ashamed to wait, as servants, in their uniforms, behind the chairs of the grandees."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

† The house of Braganza to be driven out of Portugal, and that kingdom divided into three portions, of which the province of Entre Minho e Duero and the town of Oporto, forming one, was to be given as an indemnification to the dispossessed King of Etruria, and to be called the kingdom of North Lusitania.

The Alentejo and the Algarves to be erected into a principality for Godoy, who taking the title of Prince of the Algarves, was still to be in some respects dependent upon the Spanish crown.

The central provinces of Estremadura, Beira, and the Tras-los-Montes, together with the town of Lisbon, to be held in deposit until a general peace, and then to be exchanged under certain conditions for English conquests.

The ultramarine dominions of the exiled family to be equally divided between the contracting parties, and in three years at the longest, the King of Spain to be gratified with the title of Emperor of the Two Americas.

power resident in the country were to be arrested,—all English property confiscated ;—and these stipulations were to be acceded to within three weeks, or war with both powers denounced as the alternative.

But short as was the time allowed the Portuguese court for taking these demands into consideration, Napoleon did not await its expiration. All Portuguese vessels in his harbours were seized, and an army of 25,000 infantry, with 3,000 cavalry, was ordered to march directly on Lisbon, to be joined on the frontier by a Spanish corps. Junot, a favourite aid-de-camp of Napoleon, to whom the occupation of the devoted kingdom had been entrusted, moved immediately from Salamanca. In a few days he reached Alcantara, and by forced marches was within ninety miles of Lisbon, before the authorities in that city were apprised that the enemy had crossed the Spanish frontier.

The Spanish auxiliary force which cooperated in this infamous aggression, consisted of eight battalions of infantry, four squadrons of cavalry, one troop of horse artillery, and two companies of sappers and miners; and was commanded by Don Juan Caraffa, captain-general of the province of Estremadura. Another, destined to act by itself, for the occupation of Northern Lusitania, mustered fourteen battalions, six squadrons, and one company of foot artillery, and was placed under the direction of Don Francisco Taranco y Plano, captain-general of Galicia; its point of rendezvous was Tuy, on the borders of Minho. A third, at the head of which was Don Francisco Solano, marquis del Socorro, and captain-general of Andalusia, was composed of eight battalions, five squadrons, and a troop of horse artillery, and received instructions to collect in the vicinity of Badajoz. "In order to complete these corps, it is scarcely necessary to state, that every disposable soldier in the Spanish army was put in requisition; that even the king's body-guard furnished its quota; and that in the capital itself there remained, after their departure, a

garrison made up of skeletons only, and the depôts of regiments.”*

The Portuguese court, to avert threatened hostilities, had yielded a reluctant consent, and the British minister, in consequence, had removed the arms of England from his gate, obtained his passports, went on board a squadron of British men-of-war—and Lisbon was declared in a state of blockade.

At this period the Russian fleet, on its return from the Archipelago, finding that the Baltic must be frozen up before they could reach their destination, after an attempt to put into Cadiz for the winter, from which they had been expelled by the British Admiral then cruising off that port, proceeded to the Tagus. This circumstance, accidental in itself, roused the jealousy of England still more, and the blockade of Lisbon was more rigorously maintained.

The severity of the weather, long marches, and bad roads, with no preparatory means having been taken to secure rations for his troops, had seriously disorganized the army of the invader. A little rest at Alcantara was indispensable, and from that city Junot issued his first proclamation to the Portuguese nation—a document founded on fraud and falsehood, and whose professions were violated before the printing of the manifesto was dry.†

Junot, well aware that rapid movements were best

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

† “A French army is about to enter your country; it comes to emancipate you from English dominion, and makes forced marches that it may save your beautiful city of Lisbon from the fate of Copenhagen. But for this time, he hopes, the perfidious English government will be deceived. Napoleon, who fixes his eyes upon the fate of the continent, saw what the tyrant of the seas was devouring in his heart, and will not suffer that it should fall into his power. Your prince declares war against England; we make therefore common cause. Peaceable inhabitants of the country, fear nothing! My army is as well disciplined as it is brave. I will answer, on my honour, for its good conduct. Let it find the welcome which is due to the soldiers of the great Napoleon; let it find, as it has a right to expect, the provisions which are needful.”

calculated to attain the objects of his master, pressed on, regardless of the exhausted state to which his rapid marches had reduced the raw levies of the conscription. Notwithstanding an honourable assurance that his army was "as well disciplined as brave," his march was marked by rapacity and destructiveness. The episcopal palace at Castello Branco was plundered of valuable property by his personal staff. "The very officers robbed the houses in which they were quartered; olive and other fruit-trees were cut down for fuel;" and, as if they wished to rouse to madness the passions of a bigoted and revengeful people, they desecrated the churches, "and threw the wafer to be trodden under foot." *

On reaching Golega the whole plain was inundated, and the advanced guard, which traversed it, found the water cover their knees; the rest of the troops, by turning off in the direction of Torres Novas and Pernes, escaped that inconvenience. But no obstacles impeded them. "They reached Santarem in due time, and found it in a state of great order and prosperity. None of the inhabitants had abandoned their homes, and all received the invaders with kindness; they were repaid for this conduct by the sack and ruin of the town." †

It is unnecessary to state any thing more, than that the invaders approached the capital by forced marches; that the royal family, aware of this fact by the *Moniteur*, threw themselves into the arms of England for protection and emigrated to the Brazils, while Junot took possession of the capital.

Had the Portuguese court boldly kept their ground, demanded English assistance, and roused the national spirit,

* "At Abrantes a requisition was made for 12,000 pair of shoes, but every effort of the authorities could not procure 3,000, although the neighbouring towns and villages were exhausted in the attempt. A French colonel obliged the superior of a Capuchin convent to pull off his boots; and the altars in the church of St. Antonio were used as mangers for the horses."—*Southey*.

† Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

nothing would have been more easy than to have repelled this rash and iniquitous invasion. Rash it was, for in his anxiety to enthral the royal family, Junot pushed forward to the capital with reckless haste ; and, had a popular movement taken place, exposed the first division of his army to destruction, before the slightest support could have been obtained from his reserves. "The French came into Lisbon, not like an army in collective force, with artillery and stores, ready for attack or defence, but like stragglers seeking a place of security after some total rout. Not a regiment, not a battalion, not even a company, arrived entire : many of them were beardless boys, and they came in so pitiable a condition as literally to excite compassion and charity ; foot-sore, bemired and wet, ragged, and hungered, and diseased. Some dropped in the streets, others leant against the walls or lay down in the porches, till the Portuguese, with ill-requited humanity, gave them food, and conveyed them to those quarters which they had not strength to find out for themselves." *

The French were scarcely rested in Lisbon until the true character of the invaders displayed itself. Nightly, and without beat of drum, reinforcements poured in—and they were quartered in such parts of the capital as were best calculated to overawe the citizens, and secure a safe communication between the troops. The great convents were converted into barracks, their former occupants having been unceremoniously ejected, while the houses of the noblesse and the wealthier of the merchants were taken from their owners, and occupied by the general officers and their staffs. Edicts were issued for the confiscation of English property,—the use of arms strictly prohibited,—and the inhabitants were not only obliged to afford lodgings, but subsistence, to the unwelcome inmates forced upon them by their pseudo-deliverer. Even when persons abandoned their houses, and retired to the country,

* Southey.

"they were required to support the establishment, and answer all the demands the intruders chose to make."

Continued insults and exactions* at last inflamed the people to resistance—riots ensued, and lives were lost on both sides. Junot easily suppressed the tumult, and took effectual means to prevent its recurrence. New works were thrown up around the castle, by which the city might at any time be laid in ruins,—the provincial militia were disbanded; to prevent alarm, the French commander ordered that the church bells were never to be rung at night—while the host itself, during its circuit, was to be restricted to the accompaniment of a hand-bell, and that only was permitted to be sounded thrice.

The effect of French oppression was soon apparent; trade and industry altogether ceased, and a kind of national despondency pervaded every class. The merchant abandoned himself to despair, and the peasant refused to till the ground. Suicide, a crime unfrequent among the Portuguese, occurred daily in the city—while fields unsown, and vineyards running wild, told that the peasant had become as reckless as the trader.

Such was the state of Portugal—such the immediate consequences of her military occupation by the French, assisted by their faithless and imbecile confederates, the

* "They had entered Portugal with so little baggage, that even the Generals borrowed, or rather demanded, linen from those upon whom they were quartered. Soon, however, without having received any supplies from home, they were not only splendidly furnished with ornamental apparel, but sent to France large remittances in bills, money, and effects, especially in cotton, which the chief officers bought up so greedily that the price was trebled by their competition. The emigration had been determined on so late, that many rich prizes fell into their hands. Fourteen cart-loads of plate from the patriarchal church reached the quay at Belem too late to be received on board. This treasure was conveyed back to the church, but the packing-cases bore witness of its intent to emigrate; and when the French seized it they added to their booty a splendid service for the altar of the sacrament, which had been wrought by the most celebrated artist in France. Junot fitted himself out with the spoils of Queluz, and Loison had shirts made of the cambric sheets belonging to the royal family which were found at Mafra."—*Southey*.

Spaniards. The latter, indeed, appeared to have entered fully into the spirit of aggression, and imitated the example of the "emancipating" army. Caraffa, who commanded a division at Porto, raised on his march a contribution of 4,000 cruzados at Thomar, and plundered the depository at Coimbra of 10,000 more. But while aiding in the oppression of their neighbours, and abetting the robbery of an ancient ally, the Spaniards little dreamed that the chain was secretly and swiftly winding round themselves, and that the spoilers were soon to be within the gates of their own capital.

The large reserve collected at Bayonne, with numerous detached corps along the frontier, had been put in motion by Napoleon. The second army of observation, termed the *Gironde*, under Dupont, and that called the *Côte d'Océan* under Moncey, had already crossed the Pyrenees, and were cantoned in Vittoria, Breviesca, and Miranda,—and a reinforcement of 5,000 reached Salamanca to strengthen Junot, thus increasing the French force in Spain to 50,000 effective men.

The unaccountable apathy with which this fatal movement of Napoleon had been sanctioned, cannot altogether be ascribed to the corruption of Godoy, or the imbecility of Charles. "The primary cause, that which belongs to history, was the despotism arising from the union of a superstitious court and a sanguinary priesthood, which, repressing knowledge and contracting the public mind, sapped the foundation of all military as well as civil virtues, and prepared the way for invasion. No foreign potentate would have attempted to steal into the fortresses of a great kingdom, if the prying eyes and the thousand clamorous tongues belonging to a free press, were ready to expose his projects, and a well-disciplined army present to avenge the insult; but Spain being destitute of both, was first circumvented by the wiles, and then ravaged by the arms of Napoleon. She was deceived and fettered because the public voice was stifled, but she was scourged

and torn because her military institutions were decayed."*

Meanwhile, Napoleon's plans were quietly but secretly maturing. While professedly mediating the differences of that most degraded stock of royalty which then cumbered the throne and court, where father was arrayed against son, and an adulterous mother, in obedience to the wishes of her paramour, was ready to consummate her infamy by proclaiming the bastardy of Ferdinand; bewildered by their family disputes, the wretched Bourbons never appeared to notice Napoleon's corps as they gradually overspread the kingdom, and by finesse or bribery obtained possession of every stronghold in Spain.†

Although the disgusting quarrels of the royal family had been partially compromised, they were blind to coming events, until the danger of their situation became too apparent to be concealed, and too hopeless to be remedied. The weak old king, terrified at the ruin that impended, formed the sudden resolution of retiring from a scene of endless inquietude and intrigue, to end his days, like the emperor of the Brazils, in South America. But if such indeed was his intention, the outbreking at Aranjuez, on the 17th of March, rendered the attempt impracticable. The riots at Madrid, on the following day, when the house of Godoy was plundered, and the minion saved with difficulty from the fury of the populace, confirmed the old man's apprehensions, and determined him to resign a sceptre which he thought his feeble grasp could retain no longer. Accordingly, his abdication was publicly notified on the 20th, at Madrid; and Ferdinand was proclaimed King, to the great joy of the Spanish nation.

* Napier.

† "These are St. Sebastian, in Biscay; Pampeluna, in Navarre; and San Fernando de Figueras, and Barcelona, in Catalonia. Whoever may happen to possess these four cities, may be said to command the four great passes of the Pyrenees; and to obtain the command of them at any cost and by any means, was the last and most urgent order given by their chief to the French generals."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

But the succession to the throne was not to be so easily effected,—Murat,* with Moncey's corps and a splendid body of cavalry, crossed the Somosierra—while Dupont passed the Duero, and occupied Segovia, the Escorial, and Aranjuez.

The advance of the grand duke of Berg upon Madrid, was very different from the loose march of Junot, when he approached the Portuguese capital. The columns of Murat marched as through an enemy's country, bivouacking every night, and with all the precautions to secure themselves, which are usually taken in a state of war, until they made themselves masters of the chain of mountains which separate Old from New Castile. The posts were delayed; and the French industriously spread a report, that their destination was the camp of St. Roche, and not the Spanish capital.

All the foreign ministers except Beauharnois, had congratulated Ferdinand upon his accession to the throne. This circumstance, added to the intelligence he had received of Murat's march, alarmed the new king; and his fears were further increased, when he learned that the grand duke of Berg had entered Madrid with the entire cavalry, the guard, and a division of infantry, after having despatched a corps to occupy Toledo, encamped two divisions immediately under the walls of the capital, and appointed Grouchy governor.

On the following day (the 24th of March), Ferdinand made his public entry. He was received by the populace with acclamations; but Murat at once refused his recognition. In vain the imbecile monarch endeavoured to propitiate the haughty Frenchman. In vain, on a slight intimation that the present would be acceptable to Napoleon, the sword of Francis I. was at once surrendered, after remaining as a national trophy in the Armoria Real since the battle of Pavia.† Murat and Beauharnois remained

* Grand duke of Berg.

† "It was a mere trick for the Parisians; and neither they nor the tyrant himself felt that France was far more dishonoured by the circumstances under



Angus

Angus, 1st Duke of Argyll

inflexible, waiting, as they said, directions from the Emperor. In the mean time, to add to Ferdinand's embarrassments, Charles, with singular inconsistency, recalled his act of abdication, declaring that it was wrung from him by intimidation.

In his letter to Napoleon he says, "I abdicated in favour of my son only under the pressure of circumstances—when the noise of arms, and the clamours of a rebellious guard, made me sufficiently understand that my choice was between life and death, and that my death would have been followed by the Queen's. I have been compelled to resign; but taking hope this day, and full of confidence in the magnanimity and genius of the great man who has already shown himself my friend, I have resolved to submit myself in every thing to him."

Napoleon, when apprised of these transactions at Madrid, disapproving of Murat's conduct as precipitate, despatched Savary thither on a special mission—a minister excellently adapted to carry out the objects of his master, if a talent for intrigue, and no scruples in effecting the end in view, could achieve them.

But the French Emperor could never have indulged the hope, that the infatuated family of Spain were about to consummate their ruin by a voluntary act. Ferdinand appointed a Junta, having his uncle Don Antonio at its head, and Murat a member, and then set out for France.

which the sword was recovered, than by the manner in which it had been lost. Accordingly this trophy of Pescara's victory, which had lain since the year 1525 in the royal armoury at Madrid, was carried in a silver basin, under a silken cloth laced and fringed with gold, to Murat's head quarters, in a coach and six, preceded by six running footmen, and under the charge of the superintendent of the arsenal; the grand equerry and the Duke del Pargue following in a second equipage with the same state. A detachment of the guards escorted them, and the sword was presented by the Marquess of Astorga, to Murat; he, it was said, having been brought up by the side of the Emperor, and in the same school, and illustrious for his military talents, was more worthy than any other person could be, to be charged with so precious a deposit, and to transmit it into the hands of his Imperial Majesty."—*Southey*

Deaf to all remonstrance, he proceeded on his journey, and reached Bayonne on the 20th of April. His father, who had resumed the crown, followed the example of his son ; and, accompanied by his consort, and prime minister, Godoy, he too crossed the frontier, and “ threw himself, his cause, and kingdom, into the hands of the Emperor.”*

* Napier.



CHAPTER XVI.

VIEWS OF NAPOLEON—ROYAL FAMILY OF SPAIN PENSIONED—INSURRECTION AT MADRID—MILITARY EXECUTIONS—REVOLT IN THE PROVINCES—ITS PROGRESS—HORRIBLE OUTRAGES COMMITTED BY THE MOB—LUCIEN BUONAPARTE REFUSES THE THRONE OF SPAIN, AND JOSEPH ACCEPTS IT—ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES—NAPOLEON RETURNS TO PARIS, AND JOSEPH SETS OUT FOR MADRID—PROCLAIMED KING—CONSEQUENCES OF THE USURPATION.

BEFORE the royal family of Spain had even a suspicion of impending danger, their dethronement had been decreed, and the succession finally determined. It had been for a considerable time a favourite project of Napoleon; and at Tilsit he had communicated his plans to Alexander, and the Russian monarch, it was said, had encouraged the attempt. All, however, whom he had consulted besides considered the experiment most hazardous, and Talleyrand remonstrated as warmly against the attempt in the Tuilleries, as Escoiquiz did subsequently at Bayonne. Napoleon's calculations rested upon the self-interest and apathy of the Spaniards. The nobles and the wealthy, he argued, would be deterred from opposing his wishes for fear their property should be confiscated; the clergy should be held responsible for the peaceable behaviour of the districts over which they presided; and the populace, on any demonstration of an outbreak, were to be intimidated by the severity with which their disaffection should be visited. Even should the opposition of the Spanish people be generally displayed, Napoleon concluded by observing, "that

he would crush it, *coûte qui coûte*, though 200,000 men should be sacrificed in the attempt." To colour this infamous usurpation, it was required that a formal renunciation of the crown should be obtained from the weak old monarch and his unworthy successor; and partly by threats, and partly by bribery, the father and son were induced to bend to the bidding of the despot, into whose hands they had so unwisely committed the dynasty of Spain. Charles was subsidized by a grant of the palaces and domains of Compeign and Chambord, with an annuity of 80,000,000 reales; Ferdinand, with those of Navarre, and a suitable appanage; to the Queen, a handsome dowry was secured; and to the Infantes, a guarantee was given, that they should severally enjoy the revenues arising from their Spanish commanderies.

While these affairs were being transacted in France, the insurrection of the 2d of May burst suddenly out in the capital of Spain—the populace resisting the removal of Don Antonio, the uncle of Ferdinand, who had been recalled from the lieutenancy of the kingdom, and Murat appointed regent in his place. To prevent the departure of the Infante, with the Queen of Etruria, her children, and her brother, the traces of the carriage were cut by the mob, and a serious disturbance resulted. La Grange, an aide-de-camp of Murat, who was accidentally passing at the time, received some personal injury. In a moment the whole city was in commotion; the soldiers, generally unarmed, and struggling in detached parties over every quarter of the place, were surprised by the insurgents, and butchered before they could gain their barracks, or receive support. For two hours the massacre of the French exceeded in loss of life the vengeance inflicted by them in return on the infuriated populace. But the moment of retribution was at hand; Murat filled the city with his troops, "all eager, the leaders from political, the men from personal feelings, to strike a blow, which should overawe the Spaniards, and make themselves be respected." A

short but bloody conflict ensued—the horse artillery opened on the crowd with grape and case shot, while the cavalry scattered the rabble, and the voltigeurs cleared the windows and balconies by constant discharges of musquetry. The houses were forced open, and the bayonet unsparingly used.* Every outlet was watched—and such of the insurgents as attempted to escape were sabred by mounted patrols, who occupied the different points of egress from the capital. A disorderly attack made by the Spaniards upon an hospital failed, for the sick and wounded soldiers repulsed their dastardly assailants. One gallant effort was made by a few men, headed by two officers of artillery, to hold the arsenal against the troops whom Murat had detached to seize it. As the streets by which the building was approached were straight and narrow, the guns swept them with such murderous effect that the assailants were at first repulsed; but the brave leaders having been killed by musquetry from the adjacent houses, the arsenal surrendered. At last, by the personal exertions of the French and Spanish authorities, the tumult was suppressed, and order generally restored.

Exasperated at this ferocious display of national hostility, as well as at the loss of many of his best soldiers, which the outbreak of the populace had caused,† Murat determined to visit what he termed acts of rebellion, by resorting to a summary punishment of the delinquents:

* "In the *Mémoires d'un Soldat*, the Mamelukes are said to have made a great slaughter that day. One of them breaking into a house, from which a musket had been fired, was run through with a sword by a very beautiful girl, who was immediately cut down by his companions. A man, who got his livelihood by the chase, and was an unerring shot, expended eight and twenty cartridges upon the French, bringing down a man with each; when his ammunition was spent he armed himself with a dagger, and rushing against a body of the enemy, fought till the last gasp."—*Southey*.

† Baron Larrey, in his *Mémoires de Chirurgie Militaire* (tom. iii. p. 139) says, "That the wounded of both nations were carried to the French military hospital, and that before night they had received there about 300 patients, 70 of whom belonged to the Imperial Guards."

and a movement of the peasantry over-night, who had approached the city gates in considerable numbers, and obliged the French guards to fire upon them before they would give way, probably confirmed Murat in the resolution he had adopted. A military commission accordingly examined those who had been implicated in the affray, and their condemnation succeeded, after the mockery of a trial. An appeal from the municipality to the Duke of Berg in favour of their unfortunate countrymen was heard, and a pardon promised. Grouchy, however, who then commanded a division, and who in the suppression of the insurrection had had his horse killed under him, was determined to carry the sentences into effect; and, in groups of forty, the Spanish prisoners were executed on the Prado, at the Puerta del Sol, and the Puerta del S. Vicente. As a security against a second rising of the populace, whom this atrocious cruelty had exasperated almost to madness, the streets were brilliantly illuminated throughout the night; and thus a ghastly exhibition of their dead and dying friends was presented to the unfortunate inhabitants. In many cases the work of death had been so carelessly effected, that the victims remained for hours writhing in agonies on the pavement—their groans were heard all night; and for the intimidation of the living, permission was refused to inter the bodies until the evening of the second day.*

It may be easily imagined what effect this act of cruelty and injustice would have upon a people excitable in temper, and revengeful in disposition, like the Spaniards. The tidings of the murders of Madrid were circulated over the adjoining provinces with astonishing rapidity, and the effect was what might have been anticipated. "From the mountains of Aragon to the pillars of Hercules, from Valencia to Cape Finisterre, there arose one loud and simultaneous shout, 'Long live King Ferdinand! Death to the French.' The people thought not of the defence-

* Southey.

less state of the country, its frontier towns in the occupation of the enemy, its soldiers dispersed,* and its arsenals and treasury plundered. They saw only the degradation to which they were reduced; and they ran to arms with the alacrity of men determined to regain their freedom or perish."†

Nor did the Spanish nation waste its time and energies in fierce but evanescent acts of hostility against its oppressors—a deadly but well-directed opposition to the invaders was resolved upon; and to effect the deliverance of their country, measures were adopted to combine the resources and direct the powers of an abused people against a ruthless enemy, who had, in addition to insult and aggression, already violated every law of God and man. Spain was virtually without a government—it was necessary that one should be organized without delay; and so rapidly was this hasty decision carried into execution, that on the day after the insurrection had broken out in the capital, the "Supreme Junta" was formed at Seville. It was composed of the nobility, the higher clergy, officers of sufficient rank, and members of the municipality. The members were in number twenty-three, and the title they assumed was that of the "Supreme Government of Spain and the Indies." Subordinate Juntas were appointed in the different towns and districts, who were instructed to enrol under the national standard every male between the ages of sixteen and forty-five; and despatches were forwarded to

* The two Swiss regiments cantoned near Madrid were incorporated with the corps of General Dupont; the body guards, with four battalions of Spanish and Walloon guards, were placed under the orders of Marshal Moncey; directions were given to prepare an expedition of three thousand men, which might embark without delay for Buenos Ayres; and the Mediterranean fleet, at that time laid up in Port Mahon, were required to proceed at once to Toulon, for the purpose of joining the French squadron. Preparations were made to fortify and victual the heights of the Retiro, that they might serve as a citadel to keep the inhabitants of the capital in order; whilst a regular chain of posts between it and the frontier was established." *Lord Londonderry's Narrative.*

† *Ibid.*

the Captain-General of Cadiz, and to Castanos at the camp of San Roche, to announce the bold step that had been taken, and demand the immediate cooperation of the Spanish troops under their respective commands.

The call to arms was promptly answered, and in every part of Spain insurrections burst out nearly simultaneously. The spirit that excited these popular demonstrations of hostility against the French was praiseworthy and patriotic, but unhappily it was grossly abused and cruelly misdirected. Instead of sending to the field a host of devoted combatants, it only roused a rabble into action. Their worst passions were inflamed by the truculent villains who called themselves their leaders, and the assassination of individuals, and destruction of property in every part of Spain, disgraced the first insurrectionary movement of the populace. The French at Valladolid, Granada, San Lucar, Carolina, Badajoz, and Rodrigo, were cruelly murdered by the mob—and through mistaken zeal, and sometimes feelings of private dislike, “men were sacrificed to the suspicions of the multitude, as accomplices and agents of the French, whose innocence in many cases was established when too late.”

Among those who perished through the misguided fury of the mob, was the Marquis Solano y Socorro, who had commanded the army in the Alentejo. No man deserved better of his countrymen : his character was blameless, his popularity hitherto great, he was deservedly respected by the inhabitants of the city, and regarded by the military as one of the best and bravest ornaments of their profession. Having been recalled by Godoy, he had removed his corps from Portugal, and immediately set out for Cadiz, which he considered to be a place that more particularly required his presence, as a French squadron, under Admiral Rossily,* had sought shelter there to avoid an English fleet. Seville was in an excited state, and the populace endeavoured to per-

* It consisted of five sail of the line, and three frigates ; and after a tedious cannonade, surrendered to the Spaniards.

suade him to head the insurrection, but he declined it. On reaching Cadiz, his refusal to plunge his country into instant hostilities with Napoleon, by attacking the squadron in the harbour, was furiously resented by the populace, and, led on by a Carthusian priest, they assailed his house, from which Solano with difficulty escaped, and sought shelter in the dwelling of Mr. Strange, an English banker. The attempt at concealment was unsuccessful, and the unfortunate nobleman was dragged from his hiding place. "In vain the mistress of the house endeavoured to save him by the most earnest entreaties; and by interposing between him and his merciless assailants, she was wounded in the arm; and Solano, as he was dragged away, bade her farewell till eternity. They hauled him towards the gallows, that his death might be ignominious; others were too ferocious to wait for this—they cut and stabbed him, while he resigned himself with composure and dignity to his fate; and the mortal blow is said to have been given by one of his own soldiers, who, to save him from further sufferings, and from intended shame, ran him through the heart." *

Other murders, and of equal atrocity, were perpetrated about the same time. In Seville, the Conde d'Aguilar fell a blameless victim to the mob. At Valencia, the governor, Miguel de Saavedra, was seized and deliberately slaughtered, and the city for twelve days exposed to the merciless visitations of a fanatic rabble, headed by a truculent monk named Calvo. With perfect apathy the Junta permitted this ruffian and his band to riot in bloodshed, until at last his audacity was raised to such a pitch that they began to tremble for themselves. Calvo was then surprised, thrown into prison, and there strangled, with two hundred of his accomplices.

To this fatal list of victims the Governor of Corunna must be added. "Filanghieri was, in every respect, an estimable man, and his only crime lay in refusing to become himself the leader of an infuriated multitude. His

* Southey.

death marks the temper of the times, and the inherent ferocity of the people." A part of the regiment of Navarre seized him at Villa Franca del Bierzo, planted the ground with their bayonets, and then tossing him in a blanket let him fall on the points thus disposed, and there leaving him to struggle, they dispersed, and retired to their own homes.*

Such was the state of national feeling, when Napoleon determined to carry into effect his dearly cherished project of placing a member of his own family upon the throne of Spain, which he had rendered vacant by his intrigues. Lucien Buonaparte was accordingly named as the successor of the line of Bourbon, but with singular firmness and sound judgment he at once declined the offered elevation. No one differed more widely in politics and pursuits from another than the Prince of Canino from the Emperor. Possessed of a princely revenue, imbued deeply with republican principles, and averse to the turmoil of state intrigue, Lucien indulged in classic ease, and preferred epic poetry and domestic quiet to becoming a king in name, and in reality, the creature of a despot. True, that despot was a brother; but Lucien was perfectly aware that the same overweening spirit which, during the consulate, had driven him from his councils, would now require him to be a puppet in his hands, to work the will of one to whom free agency was criminal.

Though mortified at the refusal of his overtures, Napoleon had determined that a member of his family should fill the throne of Spain. His next choice, therefore, fell upon his brother Joseph, who was reigning, not without some popularity, at Naples, over a kingdom which had long been grievously misgoverned, and which had submitted in fair war to the right of conquest. He too, by Lucien's earnest advice, declined the odious elevation; but while he pursued his journey to Bayonne, whither he had been sum-

* Napier.

moned, intending to persist in his refusal, the Emperor, who would take no denial from him, proceeded in his arrangements, well knowing that he would submit to that ascendancy which so few were capable of resisting.*

When the intentions of Napoleon respecting the succession to the throne were communicated to the executive at Madrid, they were received with a servile acquiescence, that in these authorities was disgraceful in the extreme. The Junta, the Council of Castile, and the Municipality, all sent in their adhesion. The Primate of Spain, Cardinal Bourbon, although cousin of Charles IV., in a letter, remarkable for its fawning subserviency, also tendered his allegiance to the usurper. To complete the farce, a convocation of such of the Spanish noblesse as could be persuaded to attend, was holden at Bayonne, and Joseph was in form invited to the throne, and a new constitution prepared. Ninety-one grandes and men of influence assisted at these proceedings, and the name assumed by them was "The Assembly of Notables." Nothing could surpass the meanness of their adulation when addressing both the Emperor and the new-made King; and accustomed as Napoleon was to listen to the grossest flattery, the oratory of the President Aranza was overpowering. For the first, and perhaps the only time in his public life, Buonaparte was at a loss for a reply. "He spoke, indeed, more than three-quarters of an hour, but it was vaguely and hesitatingly, in confused and broken sentences, his head bending down; and when he raised it at times, it was only again to let it fall. None of those memorable expressions came from him which hearers bear away; none of those sparkling sentiments and pointed sentences—those coruscations which at other times characterised his discourse."†

Immediately after the ceremonies had terminated at Bayonne, Joseph crossed the frontier, and proceeded towards Madrid, while Napoleon returned to the French capital. In every town through which the Emperor passed, he was

* Southey.

† Ibid.

received with the warmest enthusiasm ; and never had the French people hailed his return with more fervour after his most brilliant victories, than when he repaired to Paris after effecting the usurpation of the Spanish throne.

From Tolosa and Vittoria Joseph issued proclamations, intended to amuse the Spaniards, and tranquillize the disturbances which had broken out. But the die was cast, and the hollow professions of the intruder were drowned in the war-cry of the nation. Every post on his route was protected by a French garrison ; and the strength of his escort proved how little he trusted to the false assurances of those around him, who would have persuaded him that his brother's choice could ever become pleasing to the nation. After passing Breviesca and Burgos, he entered the capital on the 20th—and on the 24th, with all due formalities, he was proclaimed King of Spain and the Indies.

It was, however, a heartless and ill-omened ceremonial. Excepting the French soldiery, and attachés of the new government, “none cried, God bless him.” But a few houses were decorated in honour of the occasion, and to the direct interference of the authorities, these equivocal tokens of respect were to be entirely attributed. “The money which was scattered among the populace lay in the streets where it fell for the French themselves to pick up ; and the theatres, which were thrown open to the people, were left to be filled by Frenchmen.”*

While the pageant of Joseph's inauguration was enacting in the capital, the provinces were hurrying to arms. In Catalonia, Valencia, and Andalusia, “war to the knife” was about to be proclaimed ; and the Asturias, Galicia, and Estremadura had already risen. Little did Napoleon foresee the fatal results his ill-advised usurpation of the crown of the Bourbons should occasion—little did he imagine when he tauntingly remarked, “that Spain had some fifteen thousand soldiers left, and some old blockhead to command them,” that what he considered as a reaction

* Southey.

unworthy of a care, should be fostered into life, and in its consequences ultimately involve the downfall of his house. Such, however, was the case; and from the moment he attempted to establish Joseph on the throne, with claims resting upon "the consent of an imbecile monarch, and the weakness of a few pusillanimous nobles, in contempt of the millions now arming to oppose him," every step he took upon the ladder of ambition, to use the remarkable words of Talleyrand, was downwards!



CHAPTER XVII.

**FRENCH DISPOSITIONS IN SPAIN—INSURRECTIONARY MOVEMENTS SUPPRESSED
—SIEGE OF ZARAGOZA—REVOLT IN CATALONIA—SWARTE AND CHABRAN
DEFEATED BY THE SOMATENES—SIEGE OF GERONA—DUPONT'S EXPEDITION
—REVOLT IN ANDALUSIA—BATTLE OF BAYLEN—MOVEMENTS OF BESSIERS—
BATTLE OF RIO SECO—EFFECT OF THE DEFEAT OF BAYLEN—JOSEPH ABANDONS
THE CAPITAL.**

ALTHOUGH at the first opening of the Peninsular struggle, Napoleon strangely undervalued the resistance he was likely to receive, the arrangement of his plans of military operations, and the distribution of his troops, indicated the admirable quality of his talents in stratagetical combinations. The French army—Junot's corps in Portugal not included—might have been estimated at seventy-five thousand effective men; a small force indeed with which to coerce a nation burning under aggravated injuries, and everywhere up in arms. Yet possessed of the frontier fortresses, and with all the passes into France opened and secured,* Napoleon never for a moment blanched from his

* "The four principal roads which lead from France directly to Madrid, are, first, the Royal Causeway, which, passing the frontier at Irun, runs under St. Sebastian, and then through a wild and mountainous country (full of dangerous defiles) to the Ebro; crosses that river by a stone bridge at Miranda, and leads upon Burgos, from which town it turns short to the left, is carried over the Duero at Aranda, and soon after encountering the Carpentanos and the Sierra de Guadalaxara, penetrates them by the strong pass of the Somosierra, and descends upon the capital. Vittoria stands in a plain about half way between St. Sebastian and Burgos.

"The second, which is inferior to the first, commences at St. Jean Pied de

determination. He proceeded steadily to effect his purposes, and the power he wanted numerically he compensated by masterly dispositions. The different corps were centrally posted—all able to concentrate rapidly when required, or retreat, should circumstances render it advisable to fall back. "A force so physically weak could never, but for its masterly combinations, have maintained itself a week, surrounded as it was on every side by difficulties; and less ably distributed, it would have been trampled under foot, and lost amidst the tumultuous uproar of eleven millions of people."

From Bayonne, Napoleon, with his accustomed clearness and precision, had dictated his intended plans of operation, and his lieutenants lost no time in attempting to effect them. Of the different provinces which threatened a general revolt, Andalusia and Valencia were deemed the most important; and to these the French commanders turned their first attention. Dupont marched from Toledo to reduce the former to submission, while Moncey quitted Madrid to put down the insurrectionary movements of the Valencians.

The corps commanded by Dupont consisted of six thousand five hundred infantry, three thousand cavalry, two Swiss regiments in Spanish pay, and twenty pieces of artillery. The whole were veteran soldiers; and as he was to be joined by three thousand infantry of the line, and three Swiss regiments, with five hundred cavalry, and ten guns, his corps was considered perfectly sufficient to over-

Port, and unites at Pampelona; it runs through Taffalla, crosses the Ebro at Tudela, and enters the basin of Madrid by the eastern range of the Sierra de Guadalupe, where the declination of the mountains presents a less rugged barrier than the snowy summits of the northern and western part of the chain.

"The third threads the Pyrenees by the way of Jaca, passes the Ebro at Zaragoza, and uniting with the second, likewise crosses the Guadalupe ridge.

"The fourth is the great route from Perpignan by Figueras and Girona to Barcelona; from this latter town it leads by Cervera and Laida to Zaragoza.' —*Napier*.

power the raw levies of the patriots, which it was ascertained had now collected in considerable force.*

To secure the country in the rear of these lines of operations, Burgos was garrisoned; and Bessiers, who commanded there, and watched the insurrectionary movements in Biscay, the Asturias, and Old Castile, detached Lefebre Desnunettes against Zaragoza, and Duhesme into Catalonia, to cooperate with Moncey, who had marched towards Cuenca, to interpose between the patriot army of Valencia and the insurgents of Aragon.

The first desultory movements in the neighbourhood of Burgos were promptly and successfully overpowered. At Santander, Logrono, Segovia, and Palencia, the populace had risen, and having obtained a supply of arms in the two latter towns, they advanced against Torquemada; while, with a mixed body of regular and irregular troops, Cuesta† boldly took up a position at Cabecon, on the river Pisuerga.

The whole force that Bessiers could render disposable

* In alluding to the circumspection of Napoleon in his military dispositions, Colonel Napier observes, that "The conqueror of Europe was as fearful of making false movements before an army of peasants, as if Frederick the Great had been in his front; and yet he failed! Such is the uncertainty of war."

† Don Gregorio de la Cuesta, a name associated afterwards with some of the most important events in the Peninsular history, was an old and infirm man, personally brave, sometimes energetic, but always headstrong and untractable. "He was one of those who, at the commencement of the troubles, not only gave no encouragement to the feelings of the people, but exerted himself to allay them; either because he was satisfied that successful resistance would be impracticable, or, that in the changes which a revolution could not fail to bring about, many substantial benefits would accrue to the nation at large. As soon, however, as he became satisfied that it was the nation which had risen in arms, he hastened to make amends for his former backwardness, and entered heartily into the cause, which he now regarded as that of his country. It was somewhat remarkable, that Cuesta was among the number of those who held office both under Ferdinand and under Joseph. By the former he had been appointed Captain-General of Castile and Leon, an authority which he actually exercised; whilst by the latter he was nominated to the Vice-royalty of Mexico, at the very moment when his better judgment led him to draw the sword against the power which desired to promote him."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative.*

did not exceed twelve thousand men; but by directing it with judgment against the places where the insurgents were making head, he succeeded in overawing one part of a disaffected population, and dispersing those who had already banded themselves against their oppressors. At Logrono, the peasantry were routed, and their leaders taken and executed. At Torquemada, Lasalle was equally fortunate in defeating the insurgents. At Segovia, Frere, with a division of Dupont's corps, dispersed the Spaniards, and captured the artillery they had obtained from the arsenal. Merle, having joined Lasalle, marched rapidly on Cabezon, two leagues in front of Valladolid, where, with his raw levies, Cuesta, with more bravery than discretion, waited and accepted battle. The result was what might have been anticipated from the collision of disciplined troops with a disorganized rabble: the Spaniards were overthrown, with the loss of a thousand killed, all their artillery, and an immense quantity of arms. In the Montanas de Santandar, the patriots were scattered at Soncillo, Venta de Escudo, and Lantueno; while in the Biscayan provinces, Navarre and Old Castile, the popular outbreak was severely checked; and consequently in the northern provinces French domination was paramount again, and the Spanish peasantry for a season obliged to bear a yoke, from which their unassisted efforts were found unequal to effect a deliverance.

In the mean time, the French division, under Lefebvre Desnouettes, had marched rapidly from Pampeluna to the south, to reduce the malcontents of Aragon. Palafox, the Captain-General of the province, had assumed the command at Zaragoza, and when he declared against the French, "the troops which he mustered amounted only to 220 men, and the public treasury could furnish him with no more than a hundred dollars; sixteen ill-mounted guns were all the artillery in the place, and the arsenal contained but few muskets. Fowling-pieces were put in requisition, pikes were forged, powder was supplied from

the mills at Villafeliche, which were some of the most considerable in Spain; for everything else, Palafox trusted to his country and his cause."* Numbers of retired officers, and such Spanish soldiers as could elude the vigilance of the French in Pampeluna and Madrid, flocked to his standard; and thus he was enabled, with their assistance, to partially organize the peasantry, who had already taken arms with all the devotion of a people determined to perish or be free.

Nothing could be braver, and nothing more discouraging, than the first efforts made by the Aragoneze. The bridge at Zudela had been destroyed; but an attempt made by the patriots to prevent the passage of the Ebro failed, the Spanish troops being defeated, and their leaders put to death. Marching by the right bank, the French reached Mallen, and found Palafox with ten thousand infantry, a few horsemen, and eight guns, in a strong position behind the Huecha. An action took place; the Spanish forces were defeated, and Palafox with difficulty fell back and rallied behind the Xalon. There the French General attacked and defeated him again. The beaten troops retired to Zaragoza; and on the 15th the victorious enemy reached the banks of the Huerba, and made instant preparations to invest the city.

Zaragoza stands on the right bank of the river, but there is an extensive suburb on the other side, with which it is connected by a bridge remarkable for its beautiful masonry. A brick wall, ten or twelve feet in height, surrounds the city; but it possessed no regular defences whatever, and the guns were generally found unserviceable. The surface of the country about Zaragoza is flat and swampy, with the exception of a rising ground, called Monte Torrero; and as this commanded the plain on every side, it had been hastily entrenched, and garrisoned with twelve hundred men. The Ebro, which washes the walls, receives the tributary streams called the Galejo and Guerva, which

* Southey.

flowing east and west, unite themselves a little below the town. The houses are generally low, built chiefly of brick, and being vaulted, are nearly fire-proof. The streets are narrow and crooked, with the exception of the Cozo,* which is wide, straight, and regular; and the numerous convents are remarkable as well for the extent of their buildings, as the loftiness and solidity of their walls.

The first operation of Lefebre was to cut off the communication with Calatayud, and thus oblige Baron Versage to fall back with his levies to Belchite; the next, to force Palafox from the olive grounds between the convent of San Joseph and the Torrero, and closely invest the city. So successfully was the last effected, that the besiegers penetrated into the street of St. Engracia, and were on the very point of making themselves masters of the place, when some unaccountable alarm induced them to retire. Palafox was actually quitting the city by the bridge,—as he affirmed, to seek succours, but as others have stated, to effect his escape from a place he considered to be no longer tenable.

The retirement of the French was not lost upon the inhabitants. As if rousing from a state of apathy, all became animated with one feeling—a determination to repulse the oppressors of their country, or perish beneath the ruins of Zaragoza. Hasty defences were constructed, barriers thrown up, houses loop-holed to command them; and so vigorously were these works carried on, that in twenty-four hours the city was in a condition to withstand an assault.

Palafox, who had crossed the Ebro,† and joined the

* Formerly, from being the scene of early martyrdoms, it was called the Calle Santa.

† “Unlike most other places of the Peninsula, Zaragoza has neither aqueduct nor fountains, but derives its water wholly from the river. The people of Tortosa (and probably of the other towns upon its course) drink also of the Ebro, preferring it to the finest spring. The water is of a dirty red colour, but, having stood a few hours, it becomes perfectly clear, and has a softness and pleasantness of taste, which soon induces strangers to agree with the natives in their preference of it.”—*Southey*.

Baron Versage, having gotten in the rear of Lefebre on the Xalon, decided upon advancing by Epila, and hazard-
ing a battle with the French. The resolution was most imprudent, and the result disastrous, as it deserved to be. Palafox was attacked by a corps detached by Lefebre to meet him, and routed with the loss of nearly half his troops; and while Versage retreated to Calatayud, he fell back to Belchite, and, with the wreck of his little army, re-entered Zaragoza on the 2d of July. His own defeat, discouraging as it had been, was further heightened by finding that the Monte Torrero was occupied by the French, who had carried it by assault on the evening of the 27th.*

On the 29th, Verdier arrived to Lefebre's assistance, bringing with him a division of infantry, and a train of siege artillery. No time was lost by the French commander in availing himself of this addition to his force, and the convents of the Capuchins and San Joseph were both assaulted on the same day. The former was set on fire and abandoned—the latter carried by a second attempt. A bridge was thrown over the Ebro a little above the town, and the convent of San Joseph converted into a breaching battery, and armed with heavy guns.

Lefebre having been directed by Napoleon to unite himself to Bessiers with a brigade, the command devolved on Verdier, who pressed the siege with vigour. A tremendous fire was kept up from the French batteries, and shells and shot showered from the heights of the Torrero upon the devoted city. But nothing could subdue the endurance of the besieged; and their resistance kept pace with the increased means of annoyance which their enemies had acquired. The determination of the inhabitants was extraordinary, and every means that ingenuity could devise were exhausted by the Zaragozans, to render their defence

* The fall of the Torrero was ascribed to the misconduct of an artillery officer, who, as it was alleged, had abandoned the batteries when they should and could have been defended: "For this he was condemned to run the gauntlet six times, the soldiers beating him with their ramrods, and after this cruelty he was shot."

successful. Beams of timber were placed in a sloping direction against the houses, to afford a shelter from the shells: sand-bags, formed of awnings torn from the windows, were ranged behind the breaches, and with these, batteries were constructed secured by retrenchments. Every garden and olive ground that impeded the fire of the guns was uprooted, regardless of its value or its beauty. The younger monks took arms—the elder consoled the wounded, administered the offices of religion to the dying, and assisted in burying the dead. Woman forgot her fears; and many a young and once timid female was seen where shot fell thickest and shells were bursting, hurrying with refreshments to those who were working the artillery, or fighting in the streets hand to hand with the besiegers.

Furious efforts from without, assisted by treachery within, had been made, and failed. The gates of El Carmen and Portillo had been repeatedly assaulted, and the French obliged to discontinue the attack, after sustaining a tremendous loss. It was on one of these occasions that the celebrated maid of Zaragoza first distinguished herself. She had gone to a battery with provisions, but the fire of the French had cut down every man, and left the work without a defender. Seizing a port-fire from the hand of a dead gunner, Augustina discharged a four-and-twenty pounder at the advancing enemy. Inspired by this singular display of female intrepidity, the Spaniards rallied, rushed forward, manned the battery once more, and repelled the enemy after a long and bloody resistance.

The siege continued with varied success, both assailants and assailed suffering heavily, and both occasionally receiving supplies of men and ammunition. The French, by establishing a floating bridge, passed their numerous cavalry across to the left bank of the river, and thus obtained a command of the adjacent country. The city in consequence was more closely invested than ever, and the privations of the unfortunate inhabitants of course proportionately increased.

Finding that Zaragoza, although by all the rules of war a place that could not be considered defensible, still obstinately held out, and showed no symptoms of submission, Verdier found it necessary to change his plans, and adopt a system of more cautious attack. Regular approaches were commenced against the church and convent of Engracia, and the walls breached by the first discharge. The French instantly giving the assault, entered the town, and penetrated to the Cozo itself. All now seemed lost; but fortune saved the city. A strong column of the assailants, in endeavouring to reach the bridge, entangled themselves in the Arco de Cineja,* and others of the French quitted the scene of action and began to plunder. The chance was seized: the inhabitants and soldiers rallied, returned to the attack, checked the advance of the enemy, and when night fell, and the summons to surrender was rejected,† Zaragoza presented a singular spectacle, one half of the city being actually in possession of the assailants, and the other maintained with equal resolution by the defenders. The Cozo seemed the line of demarcation—one side being occupied by the French, and the other held by the Aragonese. To add to the horror of the storm, an incident occurred, probably unparalleled in the history of the war: "The public hospital being taken and fired, the madmen confined there issued forth among the combatants, muttering, shouting, singing, and moping, according to the character of their disorder, while drivelling idiots mixed their unmeaning cries with the shouts of the contending soldiers."‡

It is unnecessary to particularize the remainder of this extraordinary contest. A continued and murderous suc-

* A very long, narrow, and intricate street.

† When Verdier summoned Palafox to surrender, the terms used by both were brief and conclusive. The French General's, of—"Head Quarters, St. Engracia. Capitulation!"—was replied to by—"Head Quarters, Zaragoza. Guerra al cuchillo!" (war to the knife!)

‡ Napier.

cession of combats ensued, the Spaniards "inch by inch" winning from the French the streets and houses they had carried. In a "war to the knife" military science was of no avail; and a fanatic monk, or daring artisan, was probably a more efficient leader than the soldier of a hundred battles.* Reverses in other quarters terminated a contest that might have been indefinitely prolonged; and on the night of the 13th of August, after blowing up the church of St. Engracia, the city was abandoned, and the sun rose upon the columns of the enemy in full retreat by the road of Pampeluna.

In Catalonia, meantime, the Junta of Gerona had been active in rousing the people to resistance; and General Duhesme, who commanded at Barcelona, took measures to suppress the insurrectionary spirit that had appeared. He detached Chabran with one corps to secure Tarragona and Tortosa—while, with another, Swartz was directed to march upon Manresa, raise a contribution, destroy the powder mills, and afterwards enter Aragon, and unite his troops with those of Lefebvre, then before Zaragoza.

Swartz, after leaving Barcelona on the 4th, halted during the 5th at Martorel, pleading the severity of the weather in excuse for his inactivity. On the 6th he resumed his route, and entered the hill country, marching with unmilitary and careless haste, although the *somaten* was pealing through the mountains, and the peasantry had risen *en masse*. The Catalans had determined to hold the pass of Bruch; and the French, on arriving there, found the rocks occupied by the Spaniards, who opened a smart but distant fire upon the column; but the peasantry were soon forced from the position, and the road to Manresa uncovered. There was nothing to prevent Swartz from

* "The hostile batteries were so near each other, that a Spaniard in one place made way under cover of the dead bodies, which completely filled the space between them, and fastened a rope to one of the French cannons; in the struggle which ensued the rope broke, and the Zaragozans lost their prize at the very moment when they thought themselves sure of it."—*Southey*

advancing, but he halted when he should have pressed on.* Perceiving the indecision of the French leader, the Catalans rallied, and again attacked the enemy, and Swartz, panic-struck, fell back hastily, and commenced his retreat on Esparraguera; while at every step as he retired, his enemies increased in numbers and audacity. Finding that the long street which forms the village of Esparraguera was blocked up, the French general avoided the place, and reached Martorel on the 7th, after sustaining a heavy loss, and leaving a gun in the possession of those daring Somatenes.†

This unexpected disaster obliged Duhesme to recall Chabran, who had taken possession of Tarragona, on the 8th. Although his advance had been unopposed, his retreat was vigorously resisted. The Somatenes occupied the banks of the Llobregat in great force, and made a resolute stand at Arbos. They were however defeated, the town plundered and burnt, and the French retreat continued to Villa Franca.

On learning that Chabran was endangered, Duhesme detached a corps under General Lechi from Barcelona, to unite with the brigade under Swartz, clear the banks of Llobregat, and make a second attempt to reach Manresa. On arriving at the pass of Bruch, the Somatenes, assisted by some regular troops and a few guns, presented so bold

* "An odd accident deceived the French. There was among the Somatenes a drummer, who had escaped from Barcelona: little as the knowledge was which this lad possessed of military manœuvres, it enabled him to assume authority among the army of peasants, and he performed the double duties of drummer and commander with singular good fortune; for the enemy inferred from the sound of the drum, which was regularly beaten, that the peasantry were supported by regular troops. There were Swiss in Laida, and the regiment of Estremadura was at Tunega; the apprehension, therefore, was not unreasonable; and, after a short stand against a brisk fire, Swartz determined upon retreating."—*Southey*.

† "By the constitution of Catalonia, the whole of the male population fit for war are obliged to assemble at certain points of each district, with arms and provisions, whenever the alarm bell, called the *somaten*, is heard to ring." Hence the Catalan peasantry obtained the name of *Somatenes*.

a front, that Chabran retreated with unnecessary rapidity, followed by the victorious peasantry to the very gates of Barcelona.

This unexpected success produced a general outbreak. The whole of the country between the Ter and the Besos was soon in the possession of the Catalans, and the communications between France and Barcelona completely interrupted.

Duhesme, embarrassed by these popular movements, determined to surprise Gerona, in order to secure the communication between Figueras and Barcelona; and marched accordingly by the coast-road, to avoid the fortress of Hostalrich. The Somatenes, however, harassed his march, and obstinately contested the heights of Mongat and the defile of St. Pol. In both affairs they were defeated; and on the 20th Duhesme appeared before Gerona. After throwing up a battery, he endeavoured to carry the place by assault; and the Puerta del Carmen, the fort of the Capuchins, and the barricade of Santa Clara, were all attempted, but in vain. The inhabitants of Gerona emulated those of Zaragoza in daring and determination; and after force and stratagem had both been tried, Duhesme retired from the place and fell back on Barcelona.

While these operations had been carried on in Aragon and Catalonia, Moncey entered Cuenca with fully twelve thousand men. To cover Valencia, the patriots offered a bold but unsuccessful resistance. They were forced with loss from the bridge of Pajazo across the Cabriel; and again from the stronger position of Las Cabrillas, until their ill-appointed levies, defeated but not discouraged, found shelter in Valencia.*

* "In so large a city, for the population exceeds 80,000, a besieger might reckon upon the wealth, the fears, and the helplessness of a great portion of its inhabitants; and perhaps he might undervalue a people whom travellers had represented as relaxed by the effects of a delicious climate, by which, according to the proverbial reproach of their Castilian neighbours, all things were so debilitated, that 'in Valencia the meat was grass, the grass water, the men women, the women nothing.'"—*Southey*.

Moncey endeavoured to obtain possession of the city by asserting that he was the representative of the Junta of Madrid, and by giving promises of an amnesty for all past offences; but his overtures were sternly rejected.* The inhabitants flew to arms, the gates were blocked up, the streets entrenched, the ditches filled with water, and every effort made to resist the assailants to the last.

The result was most gratifying to the patriots; force and treachery proved equally abortive; Moncey retired from Gerona with a loss of part of his artillery, and a number of his best soldiers; and the kingdom of Valencia was left without a Frenchman.

But a still greater reverse awaited the arms of Napoleon. Dupont had been despatched into Andalusia, and crossing the plains of La Mancha, passed the Sierra Morena unopposed, and reached Andujar early in June. Finding the country everywhere unfriendly, he advanced with caution, having received intelligence that the whole population was up in arms, and ready to defend Cordova to the last. On reaching the Venta de Alcolia,† he found the long bridge, which there crosses the Guadalquivir, fully occupied by the insurgents, who had thrown up a *tête-du-pont*, and placed the main body of their forces in position on the right bank, with a second corps upon the left, to attack the flank and rear of the enemy.

With such erroneous dispositions—neglecting to break

* “The Junta appealed to the people with a spirit that inspired confidence; the very women exclaimed that death was better than submission; and Padre Rico, with a sword in one hand and a crucifix in the other, went through the streets exhorting his fellow-citizens to exert themselves to the utmost, and die, if they were so called upon, like martyrs, in the cause of their country.”—*Southey*.

† “There is a bridge upon the Guadalquivir at Andujar, which the traveller passes, and then keeping close to the stream for a considerable distance, he recrosses the same stream at Venta de Alcolia. About a day’s journey from this point lies the town of Cordova, on the same side the river as Andujar; and at a similar distance from it, on the other side, is the town of Jaen. Cordova is built upon the direct road, as well as Cremona and Seville.”—*Lord Londonderry’s Narrative*.

down the bridge, and isolating a corps while their whole force should have been kept together—the result was most disastrous. The bridge and village were stormed—the peasantry dispersed—and the French cavalry, charging with their usual impetuosity, prevented the disordered soldiery from rallying, and a general rout ensued. Dupont pressed forward without delay, and, after a semblance of defence, entered Cordova, and gave the place up to pillage.

His ultimate success, however, was very doubtful—on all sides the country swarmed with armed bands; and it was impossible to obtain wood or water at the smallest distance from his camp, without constantly losing men from the desultory attacks of the peasants. It was reported also, that several corps were about to be immediately put in motion, one from the Camp of San Roque, a second from Grenada, and a third forming at Ecija, for the purpose of defending Seville, and cutting off the French communications with Madrid. Thus circumstanced, Dupont determined to recall his advanced cavalry from Carlota, and fall back on Andujar, which place he reached on the 19th of June.

Finding that his foraging parties were constantly annoyed by the armed peasantry who had collected in the town of Jaen, the French General detached a corps, who dispersed the insurgents with some loss. The victors, it was said, afterwards committed horrible excesses, and the persons and properties of the inhabitants were shamefully abused.

Although reinforced by strong detachments, under Generals Videt and Gobert, Dupont's position became every day more dangerous. He felt himself too weak to attempt the objects which he had been directed to effect—and repeated applications for assistance from Madrid were either intercepted or disregarded. Fearing to divide his force by occupying the passes of the Sierra Morena, with an indecision, hard to reconcile with the former reputation he had acquired, "though the junction of Videt's division increased the

strength of his corps to full sixteen thousand men, he persisted in keeping it in a state of unaccountable inactivity."* Instead of advancing or retiring at once—and either movement might have been effected with success—Dupont contented himself with destroying the bridges over the Guadalquivir, throwing up a few works, and occupying Baylen in his rear.

Castanos, in the mean time, had brought together an army of thirty thousand men, of whom a considerable portion were disciplined soldiers. With this force the Spanish General moved forward; and at Jaen his advanced guard came to action with Campagne's brigade, which Dupont had pushed on, and after a very sharp engagement the French were defeated and driven back, and Castanos instantly advanced and took up a position in front of Dupont's camp.

Immediate dispositions were made by the Spanish General for attacking the enemy. It was decided that Castanos himself should keep Dupont's attention engaged, while Reding with one corps should march upon Baylen, and the Marquess de la Coupigny threaten the French left from Heguerita and Villaneuva. A third detachment was to seize the passes of the Sierra Morena, and cut off that line of retreat.

Reding's attack upon the *tête-du-pont* at Mengibar succeeded, and passing the river he drove in the French outposts; but finding that Coupigny had not come up, he fell back and recrossed the Guadalquivir. It seemed as if it had been ordained that all parties should suffer equally from uncertainty regarding the positions of each other. Videl, who had at the first alarm marched on Baylen, found it unoccupied; for when Coupigny had fallen back, Dupont had evacuated the town as untenable. A heavy firing in the direction of the passes of the Morena, induced him to believe that Dufour had fallen back on Carolina; and to secure his communications with Madrid, he marched directly to support him.

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

In the mean time, Reding having formed a junction with Coupigny, advanced a second time to Baylen ; but he was immediately recalled, as Castanos had determined to turn his whole force against the enemy at Andujar.*

Finding that his rear was on the point of being occupied Dupont at last found that a retreat was inevitable, and in the night he abandoned Andujar, and commenced retiring on Carolina. With singular imprudence he had encumbered himself with an unnecessary quantity of stores and baggage, besides the plunder acquired during his occupation of the country ; and though the head of his column quitted its ground at ten o'clock, dawn was beginning to appear before the last sections had moved off ; and when the moment of trial came, the former were found to be at the distance of nearly three leagues from the latter. " The consequence was that the French were attacked at disadvantage ; regiment after regiment, and gun after gun, were hurried into fire as fast as they came up. The French fought as an army always fights which is taken in detail ; and one part was utterly and irretrievably destroyed before another could render it the smallest assistance."†

Neither party had anticipated that an action should be brought on at the time and place where it occurred. To force a passage was Dupont's only chance, for he knew that Castanos would be presently up, and then his position must be hopeless. Accordingly, he assailed the Spaniards

* " Along the line of march, and in the town of Andujar, where he arrived the evening of the 18th, Dupont found terrible proofs of Spanish ferocity ; his stragglers had been assassinated, and his hospital taken ; the sick, the medical attendants, the couriers, the staff officers, in fine all who had the misfortune to be weaker than the insurgents, were butchered with circumstances of extraordinary barbarity ; upwards of four hundred men had perished in this miserable manner since the fight of Alcolea. The fate of Colonel Renè was horrible, he had been sent on a mission to Portugal previous to the breaking out of hostilities, and was on his return, travelling, in the ordinary mode, without arms, attached to no army, engaged in no operations of war ; but being recognised as a Frenchman, he was seized, mutilated, and then placed between two planks and sawed alive."—*Napier*.

† Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

with all the desperate determination that his perilous situation required, and the ground, on their part, was as obstinately maintained. Repulsed in his first efforts, as fresh troops came up, Dupont renewed the combat. The French fought gallantly; but a long night-march had worn them down, and in numbers and artillery Castanos was decidedly superior. A Spanish column was seen moving rapidly in their rear, La Cruz was marching on their flank, and every effort to force a passage with the bayonet in front had been tried and failed. Nothing remained but to capitulate; and the whole of Dupont's corps, amounting to fourteen thousand veteran soldiers, laid down their arms, and surrendered prisoners of war, to troops who a month ago were objects of their derision, and generals who were undervalued and despised.

Although the peasantry in the Asturias and Biscay had been severely handled whenever they attempted to make head, after his defeat at Cabezon, Cuesta rallied a considerable force at Benevente, and with the assistance of the Gallician patriots threatened to move on Burgos.

After the murder of Filanghieri, Blake succeeded to the command of the army which the late Captain-General of Galicia had organized; and leaving one division at Manzanal, he proceeded with the remainder of his corps to join Cuesta at Benevente.

As the capital formed the base of the operations of Moncey and Dupont, for the security of Madrid, as well as a preliminary measure for carrying out ulterior movements, Bessiers determined, if possible, to take the Spanish army in detail, overpower Cuesta before he could be reinforced by Blake, drive the Gallicians into the mountains, and sweeping the flat country with his numerous cavalry, communicate with Portugal and subdue Galicia, or unite with Junot, as either might seem best.

The Spanish forces when united * consisted of thirty

* "The two generals disagreed in opinion: Blake dreaded the discipline of the French, and would therefore have avoided a general action; Cuesta relied

thousand regular infantry, with thirty guns, but in cavalry they were miserably weak. The French in numbers were greatly inferior, for on quitting Palencia, on the 12th of July, after removing the garrison from Santander to strengthen his corps, Bessiers mustered only fifteen thousand men, with thirty pieces of cannon. "His line of battle consisted of two divisions of infantry, one of light cavalry, and twenty-four guns; his reserve was formed of four battalions, and some horse grenadiers of the imperial guards, with six pieces of artillery."*

Bessiers halted a night at Ampudia and Torre de Morrajo; and on the 14th, continuing his march, he drove in Cuesta's cavalry pickets, and drew up in front of Medina del Rio Seco, where the Spanish army was formed in order of battle. The whole were disposed in two lines, the first being on the brow of a gentle eminence, and the second at a considerable distance in the rear, "strengthened, or rather weakened, by seventeen or eighteen thousand peasants."† Immediately in rear of the centre was the town of Rio Seco.

The engagement commenced by a feint of Lasalle's cavalry against the front, while Bessiers, by an oblique movement, turned Cuesta's left, and interposed two divisions between his double lines. Lasalle charged home, and the first line of the Spaniards was completely overthrown. Cuesta endeavoured with the second that remained unbroken to retrieve the fortune of the day, but though the Spanish right broke the troops opposed to them, and seized six pieces of cannon, the left refused to advance, and consequently the flank of the right became uncovered. Merle's

upon the courage of his countrymen, and was eager to engage. He took the command, as being superior in rank, and they proceeded, in no good understanding with each other, in a direction which threatened Burgos. Nothing could have been more conformable to the wishes of the enemy; and Marshal Bessiers, in the expectation of sure victory, marched against them with the divisions of General Mouton and Merle, and General Lasalle's division of cavalry."—*Southey*.

* Napier.

† Ibid.

division and the horse-grenadiers charged it furiously, while the front was vigorously attacked. The Spaniards were a second time broken, their first line destroyed in an attempt to rally, and, as the country was favourable from its flat and open surface for cavalry to act, the routed army was dreadfully cut up. The Spaniards left six thousand killed and wounded on the field,* with fifteen hundred prisoners, and twenty pieces of artillery; while the loss of the victors amounted only to three hundred and fifty *horses-de-combat*. "Blake and Cuesta separated in wrath with each other; the former making for the mountains of Galicia, the latter towards Leon; and the division left at Benevente dispersed."†

The defeat at Rio Seco was ably followed up, and large quantities of arms and military stores fell into the hands of the conqueror. But Dupont's disaster paralyzed the successes of Bessiers. All hope of operating with Junot was ended; and instead of pushing his advantages, he found himself obliged to discontinue offensive movements, to cover Madrid and protect Joseph Buonaparte's retreat from the capital.

It was reported that the surrender of Dupont had been previously communicated to the Council of Castile, and hence, that they had been emboldened to refuse the oath of allegiance required by the intrusive king. When the news of the defeat at Baylen was communicated, its effect upon Joseph and his ministers was astounding; some of the latter quitted the city in disguise, others retired from office into private life, and the remainder still imagining that a French ascendancy would ultimately prevail, determined to adhere to the new government, and accompanied

* "Few bloodier battles have ever been fought in proportion to the numbers in the field, even if the force of the Spaniards be taken at its highest estimate: upon the best authority, that of the neighbouring priests, it is affirmed that 27,000 bodies were buried. The stores and artillery were taken, but the victors were not in a condition to complete the rout of the defeated army, and take advantage of the dissension between the two generals."—*Southey*.

† Napier.

the fugitive king. Joseph, "who had scarcely begun to exercise the functions of royalty, when this disastrous intelligence came upon him like a thunderbolt," appeared to sacrifice all considerations to personal security. Having issued orders to collect the scattered divisions, abandon operations in Valencia, and raise the siege of Zaragoza, he quitted Madrid on the 31st, and removed his court and government for safety to Vittoria.



CHAPTER XVIII.

STATE OF PORTUGAL—DISPOSITION OF THE FRENCH ARMY—EXPEDITION OF LOISON AND AVRIL—MUTINY OF THE SPANISH TROOPS—PROCEEDINGS AT OPORTO—CONCESSIONS OF THE FRENCH COMMANDANT FOLLOWED BY SEVERE MEASURES, WHICH FAIL—BRITAIN ASSISTS THE SPANISH PEOPLE—SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY VISITS OPORTO—DESPATCH TO LORD CASTLE-REAGH—LANDING IN THE MONDEGO—INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED FROM ENGLAND.

WHEN the intelligence of the outbreak in the capital of Spain, and simultaneous insurrections in the provinces, reached Lisbon, Junot found himself in a situation of some danger and great embarrassment. From the moment the French had crossed the frontier, they had become objects of jealousy and dislike; and no attempt had been subsequently made to conciliate a revengeful people, who saw their laws and usages trampled under foot, and religious observances, to which they were so devotedly attached, not merely disregarded, but treated with ridicule and indignity. Civil rights were violated with impunity—the altar desecrated, and the sacredness of the hearth despised. The Portuguese were treated as a conquered people; and the acts of the invaders in every way were nothing but the emanations of a military despotism.

No wonder then that national dislike ripened daily into implacable hostility; and that the example of the sister kingdom was not lost upon a people subjected, like the Portuguese, to contumely and exaction. Junot was bitterly disliked. He had personally insulted the most

influential portion of the community.* The clergy, with good reason, detested a man who on every occasion robbed them of their privileges, and lowered them in the estimation of the laity.† An exasperated priesthood, and a bigotted community, were not to be easily coerced. None could foretell the moment when popular indignation should be manifested by a sudden outbreak; for, like a loaded mine, the slightest spark would produce an instant explosion.

Junot had not been insensible to coming events; and every precaution was taken in the disposition of his troops to guard against surprise. In physical efficiency, his soldiers were wonderfully improved; and during a five months' occupation of Portugal, they had been reorganized in every arm, and their discipline perfected. At the eventful period we describe, the French army was divided into three corps of infantry and one of cavalry, and their effective strength might be stated at 45,000 men, of whom 25,000 were French, 15,000 Spanish, and 5,000 Portuguese troops.

* "Loison promised the Archbishop that his property should not be touched. After this promise, Loison himself, with some of his officers, entered the Archbishop's library, which was one of the finest in Portugal; they took down all the books, in the hope of discovering valuables behind them; they broke off the gold and silver clasps from the magnificent bindings of the rarest part of the collection, and in their disappointment at finding so little plunder, tore in pieces a whole pile of manuscripts. They took every gold and silver coin from his cabinet of medals, and every jewel and bit of the precious metals with which the relics were adorned, or which decorated any thing in his oratory. Loison was even seen in noon-day to take the Archbishop's episcopal ring from the table and pocket it."—*Southey*.

† One of the most splendid of the Portuguese ceremonials was the procession of the Corpo de Deos; and, with but one interruption, it had been annually continued since 1387—an image of St. George in full armour, suitably mounted and attended, being a prominent character in the display. Junot, however, dispensed with the saint's attendance, and very sacrilegiously appropriated his charger for another use. "One of the finest horses which could be found in Portugal was selected to bear the saint in the great procession, and reserved for that single purpose, as if any other would have desecrated it. Junot, however, had taken St. George's horse for himself, and rode it every Sunday when he reviewed his troops."—*Ibid*.

All the fortresses were in their possession, and had been repaired, garrisoned, and provisioned; while the communications were maintained between them by cavalry posts, leaving under Junot's direction a disposable force of 15,000 men. The different corps were ably commanded—Laborde had the first, Loison the second, and Travot the third division. Margaron was attached to the cavalry, and Taviel to the artillery; Kellerman commanded in the Alentejo, Maurin in Algarve, and Quesnel at Oporto; while Junot himself remained at Lisbon, with the centre of his army, to secure the capital, and hold himself in a convenient position for moving to any point which should require the immediate presence of a French force.

By the orders of the Emperor, in June, two corps had been detached towards the frontier, under the command of Loison and Avril; the former to occupy Ciudad Rodrigo, and operate in conjunction with Bessiers, and the latter to assist Dupont in suppressing the insurgent forces, which were making head in Andalusia.* On his route towards Rodrigo, Loison found that the whole of the population were actually in arms, or about to rise against the French; and when he reached the fortress, which formed the object of his expedition, the gates were closed, and he had no alternative left but to retire. Avril was still more unfortunate. Badajoz had declared for Ferdinand; all around were up and in the field; and the Spaniards and Portuguese troops attached to his division, quitted their colours by whole companies,† and swelled the enemies' ranks with

* "The moral effect of the battle of Baylen was surprising; it was one of those minor events which, insignificant in themselves, are the cause of great changes in the affairs of nations. The defeat of Rio Seco, the preparations of Moncey for a second attack on Valencia, the miserable plight of Zaragoza, the desponding view taken of affairs by the ablest men of Spain, and, above all, the disgust and terror excited among the patriots by the excesses of the populace, weighed heavy against the Spanish cause."—*Napier*.

† "Many deserted, especially of those who were quartered beyond the Tagus. Some made their way to the Spanish frontiers in strong parties. The regiment of Murcia marched for Spain in a body, in defiance of its colonel. A

effective soldiers. General Spencer, who had appeared off the coast of Galicia, and threatened a descent with a British force, added further to his embarrassments;* and Avril was obliged to abandon his intended enterprise, and fall back.

At this crisis, the intelligence transpired, both at Lisbon and Oporto, of the events which had recently occurred at Bayonne and Madrid. An immediate mutiny among the Spanish troops at the latter place resulted; and, after arresting General Quesnel, who commanded, they delivered the city to the proper authorities, and proceeded into Galicia to join the insurgents. The presence of Junot with a large force in Lisbon, alone prevented Caraffa's corps from following the example of Quesnel's. The French commandant behaved with promptitude and firmness; he disarmed the suspected troops, secured them as prisoners, and effectually prevented them from uniting with their countrymen in arms.† The insurrectionary movement in the capital was thus for a time suppressed—but the “impetus to a general revolt was given; the match was already laid to the train,

detachment of 600 French was sent from Lisbon to intercept them; they met at Os Pegoeus; this was a case in which individual strength and determination were of more avail than military discipline. The Spaniards were victorious and proceeded on their way, receiving the utmost kindness from the people; and nearly 200 wounded French were landed at Lisbon.”—*Southey*.

* “General Thiebault says, that Spencer might have struck an important blow at that period against the French: but the British troops were unprovided with any equipment for a campaign; and to have thrown 5000 infantry, without cavalry, and without a single place of arms, into the midst of an enemy, who occupied all the fortresses, and who could bring 20,000 men into the field, would have been imprudent to the greatest degree. General Spencer, who had by this time been rejoined by his detachment from Sicily, only made a demonstration of landing; and, having thus materially aided the insurrection, returned to Cadiz.”—*Napier*.

† “The whole number of Spaniards thus arrested was somewhat above 4500; they were confined in hulls upon the Tagus. The officers were left at liberty upon their parole; but after a few days, when several had broken an engagement, which, considering the manner in which they had been seized, they did not think themselves bound in honour to observe, they were placed under the same confinement as the men.”—*Southey*.

and no exertions on the part of the French functionaries could hinder it from exploding.*

At Oporto, a revulsion of political feeling succeeded the first bold burst of patriotism; and Don Louis d'Oliveira, to whom the command had been transferred, exhibited a timidity that threatened the worst consequences to the cause of freedom. But a second, and a deadlier manifestation of popular hatred appeared; Oliveira was sacrificed to the fury of the people, and a junta, with the Bishop of Oporto at their head, disclaimed all connexion with the French, and issued a call to arms.† The summons was duly answered—and the students of Coimbra, the peasantry of *Tras os Montes*, of *Algarve*, and the *Alentejo*, all rose, and responded, “Death to the French!”

In this alarming position of affairs, Junot endeavoured to mollify the general excitement, by concessions that came all too late. The soldiery, the peasantry, and the inhabitants of the capital, were severally tempted by conciliatory measures; but they were tempted in vain. Augmentation of pay, and a settlement of arrears, were resorted to, as the best means of obtaining military fidelity. Contributions were remitted, and religious ceremonials restored; but it was too late to amuse the laity by pageantries, or propitiate a clergy by false professions, who had been wantonly and repeatedly insulted. By force alone the Portuguese people were to be restrained; and Junot resolved that terror should be tried upon those, whom a display of heartless civility had failed to dupe into a passive submission to their oppressors.

To crush what he called rebellion, several moveable corps were formed and detached; the principal was directed

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

† “Porto was in a frightful state of insubordination. The people readily enrolled themselves; but, as if intoxicated with joy, they celebrated their deliverance, instead of labouring to secure it; and men who ought to have been practising the drill, or erecting batteries, and throwing up trenches, were beating drums, ringing the bells, and wasting powder in empty demonstrations of bravery.”—*Southey*.

against Oporto, under Loison; another against Fort Nazareth, under Thomieres; while a third, under Kellerman, moved to Villa Franca and Alcobaca. These operations it is unnecessary to describe; but though all were energetically carried out, and some were remarkable for the extreme cruelty with which they were executed, all failed in producing the intended effect,* for the spirit of a revengeful people had been roused almost to madness.

Britain, at this juncture, had been appealed to, and delegates from the Asturias had visited London, and received an enthusiastic welcome. Not only from the Government, but from the nation at large, did the representatives of a distressed people experience a generous and most encouraging sympathy. Subscriptions were opened in most of the large towns in the kingdom, from which considerable sums were realized, and applied to the service of the patriots. All the Spanish prisoners taken during the late war were set at liberty; and being armed, clothed, and equipped, they were transported to their native shores, that they might assist in the great work of liberating their country. Nor did the efforts of Great Britain end there; large quantities of muskets, cannon, balls, powder, and other military stores, were conveyed to different parts of the Peninsula, for the purpose of arming a population which professed to stand in need of arms only to ensure success; whilst the admirals on the station, as well as the Governor of Gibraltar, received orders to communicate with the Spanish authorities as often as need be, and to lend every assistance which the latter might require, or the former might be able to afford.†

Immediately after his interview with the Gallician

* "But even the successes of the French proved of little solid utility to them. As long as an armed force was at hand, to oppose which no means existed, a town, or village, or even a district, would remain quiet,—the very next instant after the troops were withdrawn, all became again tumult and commotion."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

† *Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

deputies, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had received ample instructions from the Government at home,* proceeded to Oporto, where the Supreme Junta of Portugal were collected. He was cordially received by the Bishop; and to his demands for supplies of cattle for the purpose of draft and the consumption of the army about to disembark, he received a willing compliance. When, however, Sir Arthur offered to land at Oporto, and march with the patriots collected there at once upon the capital, his plan of operations was overruled, and a landing nearer Lisbon recommended by both the Junta and their generals. After communicating with the Admiral, a landing at Mondego Bay was decided upon, for reasons detailed in a despatch of the 1st of August, addressed from on board the Donegal to Lord Castlereagh.

“The enemy’s position in the neighbourhood of the Tagus appears so strong, that it is considered impracticable to make a landing in that quarter, without diverting the attention by an attack to the northward. The plans of attack on Cascaes Bay would fail, because it is stated to be impossible to approach the coast sufficiently with the large ships to silence the Fort of Cascaes, and the other works erected for the defence of the bay; and although the ships of war might be able to pass Fort St. Julien, the Fort Bugio, and the other works by which the entrance of the Tagus is defended, it is not imagined that these forts could

* “His instructions were, while the fleet proceeded off Cape Finisterre, to make for Corunna himself, and consult there with the provisional government of Galicia. He was authorized to give the most distinct assurances to the Spanish and Portuguese people, that his Majesty, in sending a force to their assistance, had no other object in view, than to afford them his most unqualified and disinterested support. In all questions respecting their provisional government, should any such arise, he was, as far as possible, to avoid taking any part; maintaining only these principles, that no act done by Charles or Ferdinand could be considered valid, unless they returned to their own country, and were absolutely free agents there; and that the entire evacuation of the Peninsula by the French, was the only basis upon which the Spaniards should be induced to treat.”—*Southey*.

be silenced by their fire, as to enable the troops to land at Pasco d'Arcos, as was proposed. Between Cascaes and the Cape Roca, and to the northward of Cape Roca, there are small bays, in which small bodies of men could be disembarked in moderate weather. But the surf on the whole of the coast of Portugal is great, and the disembarkation in these bays of the last divisions of the troops, and of their necessary stores and provisions, would be precarious, even if a favourable moment should have been found for the disembarkation of the first. The vicinity of the enemy, and the want of resources in the country in the neighbourhood of the Rock of Lisbon for the movement of the necessary stores and provisions for the army, would increase the embarrassment of a disembarkation in that quarter. All these considerations, combined with a due sense of the advantages which I shall derive from the cooperation of the Portuguese troops, have induced me to decide in favour of a landing to the northward.

“ There is no place to the northward of Lisbon which would at all answer for a place of disembarkation nearer than Mondego, excepting possibly Peniche. But the fort upon that peninsula is strong, and is occupied by the enemy with a sufficient garrison, and could not be taken without heavy ordnance; and the ordnance and ammunition, which your Lordship informed me in your despatch of the 30th of June was to sail from the river on that day, has not yet arrived.

“ I shall consider the possession of the harbour and city of Lisbon as the immediate object of our operations, which must be attained by that of the forts by which the entrance of the Tagus is guarded. It is probable that it will be necessary to attack two of these forts, Cascaes and St. Julien, with heavy ordnance; and it is obvious that the enemy will not allow us to undertake these operations till he shall have been driven from the field.

“ The positions which he would take for the defence of these posts must be all turned from the heights to the

northward of Lisbon; and, indeed, unless prevented by our possession of these heights, the enemy would have it in his power to renew the contest in different positions, until he should be driven into Lisbon, or retire. The last will be rendered difficult, if not impossible, excepting in boats across the Tagus, by the adoption of the line of attack by the heights to the northward, which I also prefer, as being more likely to bring the contest to the issue of a battle in the field.

“ I have this day commenced my disembarkation in the river of Mondego, because I was apprehensive that any further delay might lead to discourage the country, and because I shall experience greater facilities in making the arrangements for the movement and supply of the army when it shall be on shore, than while it shall continue afloat. The landing is attended with some difficulties even here, and would be quite impossible if we had not the cordial assistance of the country, notwithstanding the zeal and abilities of the officers of the navy; and in all probability, General Spencer and the reinforcements from England will arrive before the troops at present here shall be on shore: if either should arrive, I propose to commence my march.

“ I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have issued 5000 stand of arms for the purpose of arming the Portuguese regular troops; who, it is intended, should co-operate with the British army in the attack on the French in this country.”

It was a fortunate circumstance that the mouth of the Mondego was open, for the Fort of Figueras had been taken by the partisan Zagalo, and was now occupied by a detachment of English marines. On the 1st of August the landing commenced, and on the 5th it was effected with but a few casualties, as the weather had continued favourable. As the last brigade was leaving the transports for the shore, Spencer's division most opportunely came to anchor. The whole were disembarked on the fourth evening; and the gallant divisions formed their first

bivouac upon the beach, and mustered about thirteen thousand effective men.

In addition to the arms and ammunition landed on the coast, and dispersed among the peasantry, the Gallician Junta had been supplied with £200,000 in specie; and the following proclamation, signed by the British commanders, was extensively circulated through the country.

“PEOPLE OF PORTUGAL.

“The time is arrived to rescue your country, and restore the government of your lawful prince.

“His Britannic Majesty, our most gracious king and master, has, in compliance with the wishes and ardent supplications for succour from all parts of Portugal, sent to your aid a British army, directed to cooperate with his fleet already on your coast.

“The English soldiers who land upon your shore, do so with every sentiment of friendship, faith, and honour.

“The glorious struggle in which you are engaged is for all that is dear to man—the protection of your wives and children; the restoration of your lawful prince; the independence, nay, the very existence of your kingdom; and for the preservation of your holy religion. Objects like these can only be obtained by distinguished examples of fortitude and constancy.

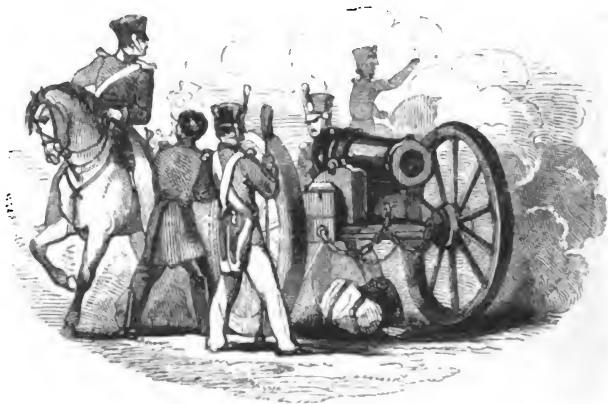
“The noble struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France will be jointly maintained by Portugal, Spain, and England; and in contributing to the success of a cause so just and glorious, the views of his Britannic Majesty are the same as those by which you are yourselves animated.

“*Lavaos, 2d August, 1808.*”

The junction of General Spencer's corps—a landing effected on a difficult coast with few casualties—and the intelligence that two divisions were preparing at Ramsgate and Harwich, to strengthen the army destined for service

in the Peninsula, were circumstances that omened well ; still the satisfaction of Sir Arthur must have been considerably abated by an announcement that Sir Hew Dalrymple was nominated to the chief command, and Sir Harry Burrard to the second.* It was farther intimated, that the ill-planned expedition to the Baltic, under Sir John Moore, which had recently returned to England, had received orders of readiness for Portugal. Thus three officers might be immediately expected in the country, all of whom were of superior rank to himself. But as he was strongly enjoined to strike an immediate blow, if possible, and had the strongest discretionary powers as to the nature of the operations he should adopt, private feeling yielded at once to public principle, and the campaign in the Peninsula opened as it closed—in victory!

* “When the tenor of his instructions, and the great Indian reputation enjoyed by Sir Arthur Wellesley, are considered, it is not possible to doubt that he was first chosen as the fittest man to conduct the armies of England at this important conjuncture ; yet scarcely had he sailed when he was superseded, not to make room for a man whose fame and experience might have justified such a change ; but by an extraordinary arrangement, which can hardly be attributed to mere vacillation of purpose, he was reduced to the fourth rank in that army, for the future governance of which he had fifteen days before received the most extended instructions.”—*Napier*.



CHAPTER XIX.

FIRST MOVEMENTS OF THE BRITISH ARMY—INEFFICIENCY OF THE PORTUGUESE PARTISANS—WELLESLEY'S LETTER TO FREIRE—LATTER REFUSES TO MOVE FROM LEYRIA—LETTER TO LIEUT.-COLONEL GRANT—PORTUGUESE DETACHMENT JOINS THE ENGLISH ARMY—DANGEROUS POSITION OF THE FRENCH—JUNOT DETACHES LOISON TO STRENGTHEN LABORDE—THE LATTER DETERMINES TO RISK AN ACTION—OBIDOS—MOVEMENTS OF THE FRENCH GENERALS—JUNOT LEAVES LISBON TO TAKE THE COMMAND—SKIRMISH AT OBIDOS—LABORDE'S POSITION.

IMMEDIATELY on landing, a conference was held by Sir Arthur Wellesley, at Montemor Velho, with Bernardim Freire, who then commanded the Portuguese army, and plans for future operations were proposed and discussed. Freire was particularly anxious that the armies should unite, march into Beira, and there open the campaign: while the English General prudently refused to give up his communication with the coast, and trust to the uncertain chances of supplies which the country might afford. A movement on Leyria, which was represented as being largely stored with provisions, was next proposed and agreed to; and on the 9th, the British advanced guard, composed of four companies of the 60th and 95th rifles, supported by the brigades of Hill and Ferguson, quitted the Mondego, and early next day the main body followed.

It was soon ascertained by Sir Arthur Wellesley that no reliance could be placed on the promises of Freire, and that very slight advantages were likely to result from the

insurrectionary movements in the provinces. The patriots were well disposed, but they were to be armed and organized to render them efficient; while the regular troops were required to be fed. Instead of finding supplies in Leyria for his own army, the Portuguese leader, having first seized on the magazines, demanded that Sir Arthur Wellesley should subsist the native troops. Disgusted with this early display of bad faith in a partisan, from whom an ardent cooperation might have been expected, the English General peremptorily refused to accede to this unreasonable request, and addressed to Freire the following letter:—

“SIR,

“*Calvario, 13th Aug. 1808.*

“Lieut.-Colonel Trant informed me this morning of the distress which your troops were likely to suffer from want of bread, and he earnestly urged me, on the part of your Excellency, to issue bread to the Portuguese troops from the British commissariat.

“I must beg leave to call to your Excellency’s recollection, what I have repeatedly told you, that it was not in my power to supply the Portuguese troops with bread; and, in fact, when your Excellency shall reflect upon my situation in this country, the distant prospect that Portugal will, in any reasonable time, be able to supply the wants of bread by the British troops; the distance at which we are placed from Great Britain, from whence we must draw our supplies of bread, under these circumstances; and above all, that I have not made any previous arrangements to answer so extraordinary a demand on the part of your Excellency; you will, I am convinced, do me justice to believe, that in declining to comply with your wishes, upon this occasion, I have been actuated solely by an attention to those circumstances attending our situation at the present moment, which are most likely to have a fatal influence on the success of the service in which we are both employed.

"I beg leave to recall to your Excellency's recollection, what I told you at Oporto, that I **could** only supply bread to the British troops, that I **repeated** this to you at Montemor Velho, and I **apprised** you in both these conferences that I should **require** wine and meat for my soldiers, and straw and **corn** for the horses and cattle attached to the army.

"I moved forward in great haste, and at great inconvenience to the army, in order to save the dépôt formed at Leyria, as I understand, for the use of the British troops. But when I arrived there, having learned from the Portuguese commissary, that if he delivered the bread to my troops, there would be none for those under the command of your Excellency, I declined to ask for it, and actually received nothing at Leyria excepting wine for one day.

"I am really much concerned that your Excellency's troops should suffer any distress, but you must be aware that the arrangements for providing for them have not fallen upon me; and that I have not required a greater proportion of the resources of the country (particularly not bread) than is necessary for those of his Majesty; and I trust that your Excellency will see the propriety of adopting some arrangement which will provide effectually for the subsistence of the army which you will march to Lisbon; at the same time that you will allow his Majesty's troops to enjoy such of the resources of the country, as I have above mentioned, which they require.

"As it is now certain that General Loison has marched from Thomar towards Torres Novas, I do not see any inconvenience that can result to your Excellency from halting at Leyria this day, or perhaps to-morrow, at which time I hope you will have it in your power to make the arrangements for your supply which I have recommended."

It is probable that Freire either dreaded the result of a battle, or for secret reasons, wished to keep his own army intact, and leave the issue of an engagement with the

French to be decided by British troops alone.* Whatever his designs were, he obstinately refused to move from Leyria; and in the very outset of his operations, Wellesley found himself abandoned by his worthless confederate, and left dependent on his own resources. That he felt the difficulty in which Freire's desertion had placed him, but at the same time was resolute in carrying out, though unassisted, the plans he had already decided to adopt, may be collected from an extract of a letter addressed to Lieut.-Colonel Grant, at that time a resident at the Portuguese head-quarters. It was dated from Calvario, 13th Aug. 1808:—

* * * * *

“As to his plan of operations, I do not see what purpose it is to answer, in view to the result of the campaign; and I certainly can never give my sanction to anything which appears so useless, and so crudely digested, so far as even to promise to communicate with or aid the person who is carrying it into execution.

“I have one proposition to make to General Freire, that is, that he should send me his cavalry and his light infantry, and a corps of 1000 regular infantry to be employed as I choose, and I engage to give these men their bread; and for meat, wine, and forage, they shall fare as well as our troops. If he will accept of this proposition, let his troops join me to-morrow at Alcobaca. If he does

* “It is obvious, that whether I am too weak to contend with General Junot, or sufficiently strong for him, there is nothing in common between the Portuguese troops and me. My object is to obtain possession of Lisbon, and to that I must adhere, whatever may be the consequence, till I shall have attained it, as being the first and greatest step towards dispossessing the French of Portugal. They may fight an action with me and retire; or they may retire without fighting; or, I hope what is least probable, they may defeat me.

“In the last hypothesis, I have no assistance to expect from General Freire.” * * *

“Alcobaca, 14th Aug. 1808.”

not, I beg that he will carry on such operations as he may think proper.

"I shall execute the orders which I have received from my government without the assistance of the Portuguese government; and General Freire will have to justify himself with the existing government of Portugal, with his prince, and with the world, for having omitted to stand forward upon this interesting occasion; and for having refused to send me the assistance which it is in his power to give."*

The decision of General Wellesley was not without effect; and Freire, obstinate and incapable as he was, perceived that without a total abandonment of his ally, he could not refuse the assistance which Sir Arthur Wellesley had demanded. But the request was ungraciously acceded to;† and on the 15th, a small corps, consisting of fourteen hundred infantry, and two hundred and sixty dragoons, joined the British army.

If the English general found himself loaded with embarrassments, the French commandant, to use a figurative phrase, was not upon a bed of roses. The news that a British army had effected a landing in Mondego Bay reached Lisbon on the 2d, and followed fast upon the heavy tidings which had been already received of the surrender of Dupont. Junot's position was fraught with danger. His force, too small to coerce a rebellious people, was divided, and at a distance. Setuval, and the posts south of the Tagus, were threatened by the insurgents, who were in force at Alcacer do Sal. The capital was

* Wellington Despatches.

† Freire had only six thousand serviceable men at Leyria; and he had at this time actually received five thousand stands of English muskets and accoutrements. North of the Tagus, the whole disposable force under the Marquess Valladeres, consisted of three thousand infantry. Hence, as Napier properly remarks, "nothing could be more insignificant than the insurrection—nothing more absurd than the lofty style adopted by the Junta of Oporto."

prepared to revolt. Every means were used to excite "the hatred and the hopes of the multitude;"* and while it was absolutely necessary that the forward movement of the invaders should be arrested, it appeared an act little short of madness, to weaken the garrison of Lisbon, when an insurrection might be momentarily expected.

Junot, however, determined to send Loison with a corps of about seven thousand five hundred men from Estremos, to strengthen Laborde, who had been detached on the 6th from Lisbon, with three thousand infantry, five hundred cavalry, and six pieces of cannon, to march by Villa Franca, Rio Mayor, and Candeiros, to Leyria, and there unite with Loison's corps. Junot remained, to overawe the disaffected by his presence; and, as precautionary measures, the Spanish prisoners were strictly guarded, the powder removed from the magazines and placed on ship-board, and the citadel and forts of Lisbon strengthened and provided for a siege. Loison's corps reached Abrantes, and Laborde's Candeiros, on the 9th; and the latter moved next day to Alcobaca, and formed a junction with Thomieres and the garrison of Peniche, thus increasing his

* "There exists in Portugal a strange superstition concerning king Sebastian, whose reappearance is as confidently expected by many of the Portuguese, as the coming of the Messiah by the Jews. The rise and progress of this belief forms a curious part of their history: it began in hope, when the return of that unhappy prince was not only possible, but might have been considered likely; it was fostered by the policy of the Braganzan party after all reasonable hope had ceased; and length of time served only to ripen it into a confirmed and rooted superstition. * * * * *

This folly gave occasion to many impositions, which served less to expose the credulity of individuals, than to increase the prevalent delusion. One Sebastianist found a letter from king Sebastian in the belly of a fish, appointing him to meet him at night on a certain part of the shore. A more skilful trick was practised upon another with perfect success. An egg was produced, with the letters V. D. S. R. P. distinctly traced upon the shell; the owner of the hen, in whose nest it was deposited, fully believed that it had been laid in this state; and the letters were immediately interpreted to mean 'Vive Dom Sebastian Rei de Portugal.' The tidings spread over the city, and crowds flocked to the house. The egg was sent round in a silver salver to the higher order of believers."—*Southey*.

strength by one thousand men. On the same day, Sir Arthur Wellesley's advanced guard entered Leyria, where his main body arrived on the 11th.

The French general had determined to check the progress of the invaders; and, intending to risk an action, he decided on making a stand at Batalha—but having found that the position was much too extensive for his limited numbers to defend, he fell back during the night on Obidos.

This little town stands boldly out upon an insulated height, and its old castle, the work of the Moors, stamps it with antiquity. Between Obidos and Caldas the country is tolerably level, but interspersed here and there with open pine woods. Laborde, having a much stronger position in his rear, retired on the 14th to Rolica, leaving strong pickets to occupy Obidos and the windmill at Brilos, three miles in front.

Sir Arthur Wellesley's advance was happily timed—it prevented the intended junction of the French, and embarrassed Loison and Laborde, as each was ignorant of the exact position of the other. Loison, finding Leyria in possession of the British, fell back on Santarem,* through Torres Novas; while Laborde, alarmed lest his communications should be endangered, regarrisoned Peniche with a Swiss regiment, and sent a detachment to the right by Bombarral and Segura, to ascertain where Loison's corps were halted. "Sir Arthur Wellesley's first movement had thus cut the line of communication between Loison

* The French suffered dreadfully from the intense heat of the weather, the scarcity of water, and the length of their marches, some of which, it was said, cost Loison a loss of one hundred men.—"Whole companies lay down upon the way; many died of thirst, and more would have perished if the officers of the staff, as soon as they arrived at that city, had not gone out with a great number of the inhabitants carrying water to meet them; brandy also was sent out, and carts to convey those who were unable to proceed further on foot.

The troops were so dreadfully exhausted, that Loison was compelled to remain two days at Santarem."—*Southey*.

and Laborde, caused a loss of several forced marches to the former, and obliged the latter to risk an action with more than twice his own numbers."*

While his lieutenants were thus engaged, Junot had come to a determination of taking the field in person, leaving the capital in charge of General Travot, with a garrison of seven thousand men. On the 15th, the same day on which Sir Arthur Wellesley's light troops entered Caldas, Junot moved from Lisbon with the whole of his reserve, consisting of two thousand infantry, six hundred cavalry, and ten guns, taking with him also his military chest and spare ammunition. Circumstances delayed his march; at Saccavem the ferry-boat had been removed by the peasantry, and he lost an entire day in throwing a bridge across the creek; and when on his route to Otta, a report that the English had landed in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, induced him to retrace his steps to Villa Franca, which place he reached before he had discovered that the alarm was groundless. Leaving the reserve under the direction of Thiebault, Junot proceeded direct to Alcoentre, and there assumed the command of Loison's corps.

• Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the meantime, had pushed forward to attack Laborde; and he thus details the opening movements, which brought, for the first time, under fire those matchless soldiers, whom afterwards he so often led to victory.

"Caldas, 16th Aug. 1808.

"I marched from Leyria on the 13th, and arrived at Alcobaca on the 14th, which place the enemy had abandoned in the preceding night; and I arrived here yesterday. The enemy, about 4000 in number, were posted about ten miles from hence at Rolica; and they occupied Obidos, about three miles from hence, with their advanced posts. As the possession of this last village was important

* Napier.

to our future operations, I determined to occupy it; and as soon as the British infantry arrived upon the ground, I directed that it might be occupied by a detachment, consisting of four companies of riflemen, of the 60th and 95th regiments.

“The enemy, consisting of a small picket of infantry and a few cavalry, made a trifling resistance, and retired; but they were followed by a detachment of our riflemen to the distance of three miles from Obidos. The riflemen were there attacked by a superior body of the enemy, who attempted to cut them off from the main body of the detachment to which they belonged, which had now advanced to their support; larger bodies of the enemy appeared on both the flanks of the detachments; and it was with difficulty that Major-General Spencer, who had gone out to Obidos when he heard that the riflemen had advanced in pursuit of the enemy, was enabled to effect their retreat to that village. They have since remained in possession of it, and the enemy have retired entirely from the neighbourhood.”*

The French general was placed in a situation that required no small display of personal intrepidity, and a sound discretion to direct it. Loison was distant from him a full march, and Thiebault still further removed from the chance of supporting him. To fight, would expose him to a conflict with an army of twice his force; and to retreat, was fraught with dangerous results, although three lines were open by which he might retire. If he should retreat by Torres Vedras, his communication with Loison must be entirely cut off; should he march on Montachique, the line of Torres Vedras would be exposed; and to fall back, and join Loison at Alcoentre, would open a direct route for the British army to march upon the capital. “Animated by the danger, encouraged by the local advantages of his position, and justly confident in his own

* Wellington Despatches.

talents, Laborde resolved to abide his enemy's assault ; " * and this bold determination was admirably followed up by the ability of his dispositions, and the obstinacy of his resistance.

* Napier.



CHAPTER XX.

VILLAGE OF ROLICA—LABORDE'S POSITION—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—DESPATCH TO LORD CASTLEREAGH—ROLICA—ITS INTEREST AS A BATTLE, AND MORAL EFFECT—OPENING MOVEMENTS OF THE 17TH—STORMING OF THE CENTRE PASS—CASUALTIES OF BOTH ARMIES—DEATH OF COLONEL LAKE—LETTER OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY TO MR. BURROUGH.

NEVER was a sweeter spot chosen for the scene of a murderous combat, than that which the village of Rolica, and its surrounding landscape, presented at sun-rise on the 17th of August. The place, with its adjacent hamlets, contained, as it was computed, a population of nearly three hundred families. The houses were neat and commodious, each surrounded by an inclosed garden, stocked with vines; while the country about the villages, studded thickly with olive grounds, ilex groves, and cork woods, exhibited all that rustic comfort, which marks a contented and industrious peasantry. Upon a table land, immediately in front of Rolica, and overlooking the country for many miles, the French were strongly posted. Laborde had seized every advantage a position of immense strength naturally presented—while the Sierra afforded a succession of posts on which he might easily fall back. In his rear, the ridge of Zambugeira ran east and west for three quarters of a mile,

yielding a fine point on which to rally if driven from his first line of defence. Beyond this, heights of amazing difficulty to force, stretched from the Tagus to the ocean; while on the left, ridge after ridge rose in towering grandeur, and united with the Alpine height called the Sierra de Baragueda.

A French eagle was planted on the highest point of Monte St. Anna, near a wooden cross, which marked the spot of some murder or accidental death. "The view from these heights is singularly beautiful, presenting just such objects as Gaspar Poussin delighted in painting, and in such combination as he would have placed them—rocks and hills rising in the valley, open groves, churches with their old galilees, and houses with all the picturesque verandahs and porticoes, which bespeak a genial climate: Obidos, with its walls and towers, upon an eminence in middle distance, and its aqueduct stretching across the country as far as the eye could follow it; Monte Junto far to the east; and on the west the Atlantic."* Such was the scene, on which the best troops in the world were first opposed to each other upon the Peninsula; and such the ground, on which the first of many glorious and well-contested fields was to be won by the victor of Assye.

"All the arrangements for attack having been completed on the preceding evening, at dawn the British got under arms. A sweeter morning never broke;—the mountain mists dispersed, the sun shone gloriously out, a thousand birds were singing, and myriads of wild flowers shed their fragrance around. Nature seemed everywhere in quiet and repose—presenting a strange contrast to the roar of battle which immediately succeeded, and the booming of artillery, as, repeated by a thousand echoes, it reverberated among the lately peaceful hills."†

Such was the scene—and the details of the action are

* Southey.

† Victories of the British Army.

thus clearly described in Sir Arthur Wellesley's despatch, addressed to Lord Castlereagh, and dated from Villa Verde, the evening of the day of battle.

“MY LORD,

“The French general, Laborde, having continued in his position at Rolica since my arrival at Caldas on the 15th inst. I determined to attack him in it this morning. Rolica is situated on an eminence, having a plain in its front, at the end of a valley, which commences at Caldas, and is closed to the southward by mountains, which join the hills forming the valley on the left. Looking from Caldas, in the centre of the valley, and about eight miles from Rolica, is the town and old Moorish fort of Obidos, from whence the enemy's pickets had been driven on the 15th; and from that time he had posts in the hills on both sides of the valley, as well as in the plain in front of his army, which was posted on the heights in front of Rolica, its right resting upon the hills, its left upon an eminence, on which was a windmill, and the whole covering four or five passes into the mountains in his rear.

“I have reason to believe that his force consisted of at least 6000 men, of which about 500 were cavalry, with five pieces of cannon; and there was some reason to believe that General Loison, who was at Rio Mayor yesterday, would join General Laborde by his right in the course of the night.

“The plan of attack was formed accordingly, and the army having broken up from Caldas this morning, was formed into three columns. The right, consisting of 1200 Portuguese infantry, and 50 Portuguese cavalry, destined to turn the enemy's left, and penetrate into the mountains in his rear. The left, consisting of Major-General Ferguson's and Brigadier-General Bowes's brigades of infantry, three companies of riflemen, a brigade of light artillery, and 20 British and 20 Portuguese cavalry, was destined, under the command of Major-General Ferguson, to ascend the hills at

Obidos, to turn all the enemy's posts on the left of the valley, as well as the right of his post at Rolica. This corps was also destined to watch the motions of General Loison on the enemy's right, who I had heard had moved from Rio Mayor towards Alcoentre last night. The centre column, consisting of Major-General Hill's, Brigadier-General Nightingale's, Brigadier-General Craufurd's, and Brigadier-General Fane's brigades, (with the exception of the riflemen detached with Major-General Ferguson,) and 400 Portuguese light infantry, the British and Portuguese cavalry, a brigade of nine-pounders, and a brigade of six-pounders, was destined to attack General Laborde's position in the front.

"The columns being formed, the troops moved from Obidos about seven o'clock in the morning. Brigadier-General Fane's riflemen were immediately detached into the hills on the left of the valley, to keep up the communication between the centre and left columns, and to protect the march of the former along the valley, and the enemy's posts were successively driven in. Major-General Hill's brigade, formed in three columns of battalions, moved on the right of the valley, supported by the cavalry, in order to attack the enemy's left; and Brigadier-Generals Nightingale and Craufurd moved with the artillery along the high road, until at length the former formed in the plain, immediately in the enemy's front, supported by the light infantry companies, and the 45th regiment of Brigadier-General Craufurd's brigade; while the other two regiments of this brigade (the 50th and 91st), and half of the nine-pounder brigade, were kept as a reserve in the rear.

"Major-General Hill and Brigadier-General Nightingale advanced upon the enemy's position, at the same moment Brigadier-General Fane's riflemen were in the hills on his right, the Portuguese in a village upon his left, and Major-General Ferguson's column was descending from the heights into the plain. From this situation the enemy

retired by the passes into the mountains with the utmost regularity, and the greatest celerity; and notwithstanding the rapid advance of the British infantry, the want of a sufficient body of cavalry was the cause of his suffering but little loss on the plain.

“ It was then necessary to make a disposition to attack the formidable position which he had taken up.

“ Brigadier-General Fane's riflemen were already in the mountains on his right; and no time was lost in attacking the different passes, as well to support the riflemen as to defeat the enemy completely.

“ The Portuguese infantry were ordered up a pass on the right of the whole. The light companies of Major-General Hill's brigade, and the 5th regiment, moved up a pass next on the right; and the 29th regiment, supported by the 9th regiment, under Brigadier-General Nightingale, a third pass; and the 45th and 82d regiments passes on the left.

“ These passes were all difficult of access, and some of them were well defended by the enemy, particularly that which was attacked by the 29th and 9th regiments. These regiments attacked with the utmost impetuosity, and reached the enemy before those whose attacks were to be made on their flanks.

“ The defence of the enemy was desperate; and it was in this attack principally that we sustained the loss which we have to lament, particularly of that gallant officer, the Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Lake, who distinguished himself upon this occasion. The enemy was, however, driven from all the positions he had taken in the passes of the mountains, and our troops were advanced in the plains on their tops. For a considerable length of time the 29th and 9th regiments alone were advanced to this point, with Brigadier-General Fane's riflemen at a distance on the left; and they were afterwards supported by the 5th regiment, and by the light companies of Major-General Hill's brigade, which had come upon their right, and by the other troops ordered to ascend the mountains, who came up by degrees.

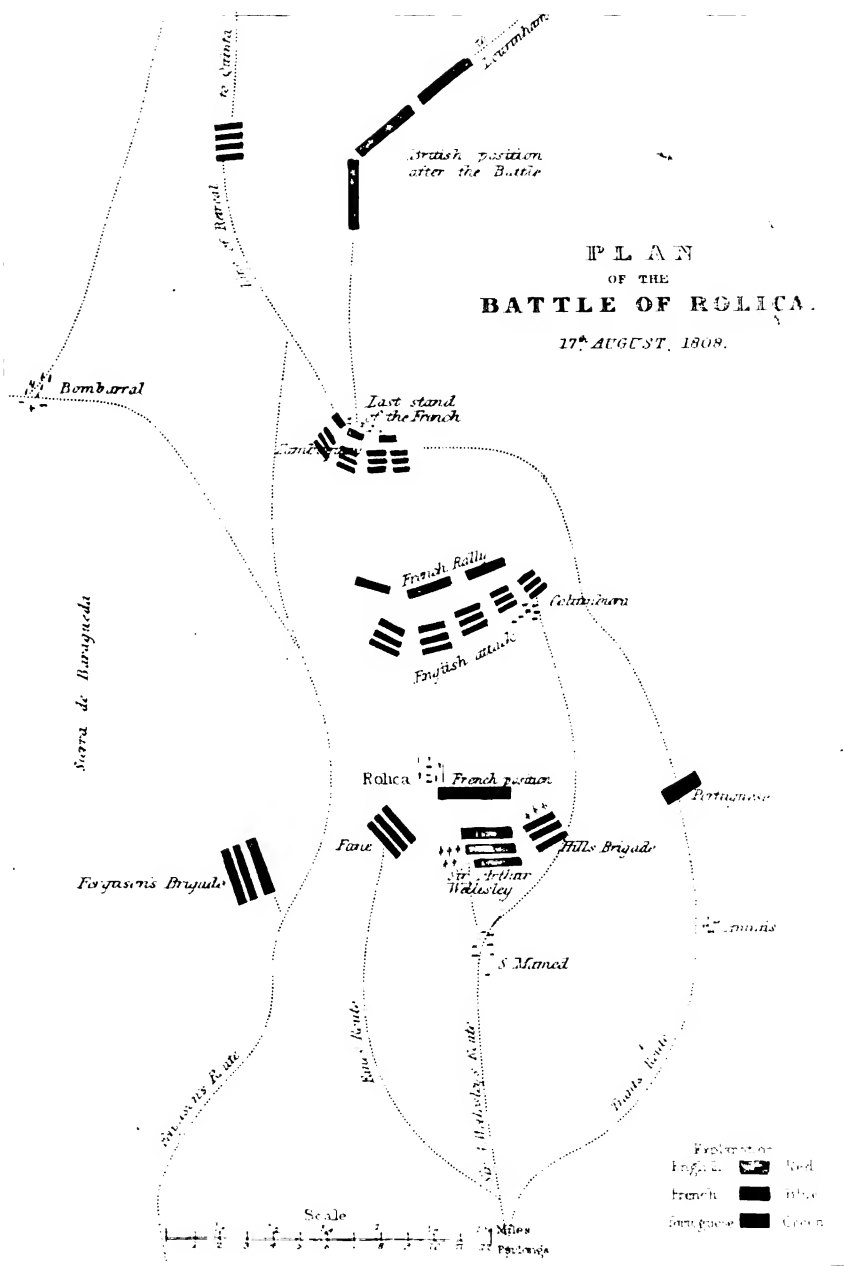
“ The enemy here made three most gallant attacks upon the 29th and 9th regiments, supported as I have above stated, with a view to cover the retreat of his defeated army, in all of which he was however repulsed; but he succeeded in effecting his retreat in good order, owing principally to my want of cavalry; and, secondly, to the difficulty of bringing up to the passes of the mountains with celerity, a sufficient number of troops and of cannon to support those which had first ascended. The loss of the enemy has, however, been very great, and he left three pieces of cannon in our hands.

“ I cannot sufficiently applaud the conduct of the troops throughout this action. The enemy's positions were formidable; and he took them up with his usual ability and celerity, and defended them most gallantly. But I must observe, that, although we had such a superiority of numbers employed in the operations of this day, the troops actually engaged in the heat of the action were, from unavoidable circumstances, only the 5th, 9th, 29th, the riflemen of the 95th and 60th, and the flank companies of Major-General Hill's brigade; being a number by no means equal to that of the enemy. Their conduct, therefore, deserves the highest commendations.”*

There is no reminiscence of the Peninsula, which the soldier recalls with more pride, than the small but brilliant action of Rolica. It is true that the scale was limited, and that the mighty masses with which after battle-fields were crowded were wanting for effect; but nothing could be more perfect than Wellesley's attack—nothing more scientific than Laborde's resistance. Other circumstances add to the interest of this gallant affair. It was the first trial of the Hero of Assye opposed to European troops; and these also, troops that with no absurd pretension, had claimed the title of invincible.

The moral effect of the combat of Rolica was of im-

* Wellington Despatches.



mense importance. It was the dawning of a glorious day ; and its results were admirably calculated to confirm the wavering faith of doubtful allies, and remove the conviction of the French regarding their military superiority. It was a noble compliment paid by Napoleon to British infantry, when he observed, " that they never knew when they were beaten ;" and it was the happiest delusion under which a soldier ever laboured—in fancying himself unconquerable. That belief had been artfully cherished by Napoleon ; and to its prevalence among his soldiers, half his victories may be ascribed. But the trial at Rolica at once dispelled the dream ; and the French discovered in the island soldiers to whom they were opposed, men, in every thing their equals—and, in unflinching gallantry their superiors infinitely.

When Rolica betrayed the fine properties of British soldiers to their enemies, it was not its least advantage, that it also confirmed the confidence of their leader in the troops on whom he depended for success. If the sharp affair at Obidos proved the gallantry,* the advance upon Rolica displayed the high discipline of Wellesley's little army. The following graphic sketch happily describes the opening movements of the 17th.

" As the distance between Caldas and Rolica falls not short of three leagues, the morning was considerably advanced before the troops arrived within musket shot of the French outposts. Nothing could exceed the orderly and gallant style in which they traversed the intervening space. The day chanced to be remarkably fine, and the scenery through which the columns passed was varied and striking ;

* " We are going on well ; the army in high order, and in great spirits. We make long marches, to which they are becoming accustomed ; and I make no doubt they will be equal to any thing when we shall reach Lisbon. I have every hope of success.

" The affair of the advanced posts of yesterday evening was unpleasant, because it was quite useless ; and was occasioned contrary to orders, solely by the imprudence of the officer, and the dash and eagerness of the men."—*Despatch to Lord Castlereagh, 15th August.*

but they were by far the most striking feature in the whole panorama. Whenever any broken piece of ground, or other natural obstacle came in the way, the head of the column having passed it, would pause till the rear had recovered its order, and resumed its station; and then the whole would press forward, with the same attention to distances, and the same orderly silence, which are usually preserved at a review. At last, however, the enemy's line became visible, and in a few minutes afterwards the skirmishers were engaged. The centre division now broke into columns of battalions; that on the left pressed on with a quick pace, whilst the riflemen on the right drove in, with great gallantry, and in rapid style, the tirailleurs opposed to them."*

Laborde's first position soon became untenable—his rear was endangered; and, without a moment's indecision, he fell farther back, and occupied the mountain passes. Nothing could be stronger than this second position. "The way by which the assailants had to ascend was up ravines, rather than paths, more practicable for goats than men; so steep, that in many parts a slip of the foot would have been fatal; in some parts overgrown with briers, and in others impeded by fragments of rock."† Of these the centre was the most practicable; and the 29th and 9th regiments advanced to storm it, under the fire of the British guns; while a cloud of skirmishers vanished among rocks and copse-wood, connecting the advance of the different columns, and feeling or forcing their way through obstacles, that a vigorous defence had rendered almost insurmountable. Gradually, the scene became more animated, as on each of the several points of attack, the assailants and the assailed became warmly engaged. The spattering fusilade of the light troops was lost in the rolling volleys of the columns, which, with the deeper boom of cannon, echoed loudly through the mountains. The hollow watercourses, by which the British had attacked, hid for a

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

† Southey.

time the combatants from view—but the smoke wreathing over the ravines, showed by its density the place where the work of death went fastest on. On the left, Laborde gradually lost ground; but on the right, his exertions were redoubled, in the desperate hope that Loison might yet come up, and thus retrieve the fortune of the day. Here, of course, the struggle became bloodiest. While the flank movements of Trant and Ferguson had not yet proved themselves successful, the 9th and 29th regiments forced their respective passes, and gained the plateau of the hill. They reached the summit out of breath, their ranks disordered, and their formation requiring a few minutes to correct. At that moment, a fine battalion of Laborde's came boldly forward, delivered a shattering volley, and broke through the centre of the British regiment. But the 29th were broken, not beaten—and the 9th came to their assistance. The officers discharged their duties nobly, and the men fought, and formed, and held their ground with desperate obstinacy, until Ferguson won the right flank of the position; when, aware that the chance of support was hopeless, Laborde retreated in excellent order, covering the regressive movement of his battalions by repeated charges of his cavalry.

His last stand was made at Zambugeira. The British, now come up in force, rendered opposition unavailing, and falling back on the Quinta de Bugagliera, he united his beaten corps with the troops he had detached to look after Loison at Segura; thence, abandoning his guns, he marched by the pass of Runa, and gained Montachique by a severe night march, leaving the line of Torres Vedras uncovered, and, consequently, Lisbon open to the advance of the British army.

The casualties on both sides, considering the small number actually engaged, marks Rolica as one of the most sanguinary conflicts which has occurred in modern warfare. The actual combatants did not exceed five thousand men; and the French loss, on a low estimate, amounted to

seven hundred, and the British to nearly five hundred, in killed, wounded, and missing.* Laborde was wounded early in the action, but refused to leave the field; and the British loss included two Lieutenant-Colonels.

Of the many gallant officers who fell during the Peninsular struggle, none had given higher promise of rising to professional eminence, and none was more deeply and deservedly lamented, than Lieut.-Colonel Lake, of the 29th. A career, which had opened so gloriously under his distinguished father† in the East, was prematurely closed almost in the moment of victory at Rolica.‡ In advancing up the pass, the leading companies of Lake's regiment came suddenly in front of a myrtle grove, that had been crowded with French skirmishers, who "opened a fire both

* Return of killed, wounded, and missing of the British army, on the 17th of August, 1808 :—

Officers.			Non-commis. Officers and Drummers.			Rank & File.			Horses.		Total Non-commis. Officers, and Rank and File, Killed, Wounded, and Missing.	Total Horses Killed and Wounded.
Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.		
4	20	4	3	20	2	63	295	68	1	2	479	3

Wellington Despatches.

† Lord Lake.

‡ "The activity and zeal of General Lake was ably seconded by the officers of his staff, amongst whom his son, Major Lake, was peculiarly distinguished. This young officer constantly attended his father's person in the capacity of aide-de-camp; and having on former occasions given striking proofs of his ability in that station, he now held the highest place in the General's confidence as well as in his affection. In this last action, while leading one of the attacks against the enemy, the General's horse was shot under him, when his son in a moment dismounted, and gave him his horse, which the General was at first unwilling to take, but his son's earnest entreaty made him accept it. Major Lake then mounted a trooper's horse, but at that instant a shot struck him, by which he was severely wounded, whilst at the same time a movement of the enemy's obliged the General to push forward the attack, and to leave his son upon the field, doubtful whether he should ever see him again."



from the front and flanks, which nothing but the most determined bravery on the part of the British troops could have resisted. As may be imagined, the advance of the column was for a moment checked, but it was only for a moment. Colonel Lake, who led the attack, waving his hat in his hand, called on the men to follow.* The call was answered by a cheer, and the grenadiers rushed forward; while confident in themselves and in their position, the French offered a desperate resistance, until, inch by inch, the 29th fought their way to the crest of the plateau. In the midst of this desperate contest their gallant leader fell; the last sound he heard was the wild hurra of his victorious regiment; and the last word that passed his lips was, "Forward!"

In a letter addressed by Sir Arthur Wellesley to a near relative,† while he paid a high and well-deserved eulogium to the memory of a companion in arms, the language in which it was conveyed was most creditable to the manly character of the victor of Rolicca.

"I do not recollect any occasion upon which I have written with more pain to myself than I do at present to communicate to you the death of your gallant brother-in-law. He fell in the attack of a pass in the mountains, at the head of his regiment, the admiration of the whole army; and there is nothing to be regretted in his death, excepting the untimely moment at which it has afflicted his family, and has deprived the public of the services of an officer who would have been an ornament to his profession, and an honour to his country.

"It may at the moment increase the regret of those who lose a near and dear relation, to learn that he deserved and enjoyed the respect and affection of the world at large, and particularly of the profession to which he belonged; but I am convinced that however acute may be the sensation which it may at first occasion, it must in the end be satisfactory to the family of such a man as Colonel Lake,

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

† R. Borough, Esq.

to know that he was respected and loved by the whole army; and that he fell, alas! with many others, in the achievement of one of the most heroic actions that have been performed by the British army.

"I cannot desire to be remembered to Mrs. Borough; but I beg you to

"Believe me, &c.

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

"*Lourinha, 18th Aug. 1808.*"



CHAPTER XXI.

PROSPECTS OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY—GENERAL ANSTRUTHER LANDS WITH A REINFORCEMENT—ADVANCE ON LISBON—SIR HARRY BURRARD ARRIVES—HIS INTERVIEW WITH SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY—JUNOT DETERMINES TO ATTACK THE BRITISH—STRENGTH OF THE RIVAL ARMIES—DESPATCH TO SIR HARRY BURRARD—DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE—DIFFERENT ATTACKS REPULSED—FERGUSON'S CHARGE—SOLIGNAC AND BRENNIER WOUNDED, AND THE LATTER MADE PRISONER—STATE OF BOTH ARMIES—CONSEQUENCES OF AN IMMEDIATE ADVANCE—SIR HEW DALRYMPLE ARRIVES, AND TAKES COMMAND OF THE ARMY—HIS DISPOSITIONS—LOSS OF BOTH ARMIES IN THE BATTLE—KELLERMAN ARRIVES AT THE BRITISH CAMP.

HAVING continued the pursuit as far as Villa Verde, on the road to Torres Vedras, Sir Arthur Wellesley halted, with the full intention of pressing the French retreat early next morning. The brilliant success of their first encounter with the enemy, had roused the ardour of the British soldiery to a pitch of enthusiasm, which bade fair to overcome every obstacle that might present itself; and not a doubt existed that a rapid march would bring Sir Arthur to the capital, or, should Junot risk a battle, that a second victory would place Lisbon in the possession of the conquerors. But overnight a messenger arrived, and caused the orders issued for advancing to be recalled. Intelligence was brought the English commander, that General Anstruther, with a brigade from England, and a fleet of store-ships, had anchored off Peniche; and to secure the safe landing of the troops and stores, Sir Arthur moved on Lourinha, and next day continuing

his march towards the coast, on the evening of the 19th took up a position beside the village of Vimieiro,* having detached a brigade to cover the march of General Anstruther's reinforcement, which, after immense difficulty, had been landed in the Bay of Maceira, and that too in the face of a very superior cavalry, who overspread the country around the position, and increased the dangers of disembarking. Another brigade, under General Acland, arrived on the 20th, and landed that night, increasing Sir Arthur Wellesley's force to sixteen thousand men and eighteen pieces of artillery.

Thus reinforced, the British general determined on active operations; and orders were issued for an immediate advance towards Lisbon. From the most accurate information he could obtain, Junot's force might be reckoned at eighteen thousand men, of whom, when garrisons were deducted, fourteen thousand remained disposable. Expecting the arrival of both Sir Harry Burrard and Sir John Moore, Wellesley wrote to the former a detail of all that had occurred, and recommended that Sir John Moore, on arriving on the coast, should land in the Mondego, march instantly on Santarem, and thus protect the left of Sir Arthur's army, and interrupt the communication between Elvas and the capital. In that case, Junot had no alternative but to abandon Lisbon, and retreat on Almeida, or risk a battle with the British army advancing by the coast. In case of attack, Moore would have been perfectly secure; for the positions in front of Santarem were easily defended; while at Granada, three thousand Spaniards were stationed, and Freire,† with five thousand

* "As the position had been merely taken for the night, the ground had been selected with less attention to security than comfort. On a height westward of the village the infantry brigades were bivouacked; the commissariat and parc were quartered in the village; and the cavalry, with a few guns, in the low grounds between the heights on which the infantry were posted. The whole position, though much too extensive, was tolerably strong."

† The infatuation of that unhappy man cannot be accounted for. His conduct all through was disgraceful; and he appears to have been utterly blind to

Portuguese, was calmly watching the result, and, in perfect security, awaiting the issue of the contest, caring little apparently for which side victory should declare.

Very unfortunately, at this critical juncture the arrival of Sir Harry Burrard was announced; and Sir Arthur Wellesley went on board the frigate in Maceira Roads to communicate with his senior officer. He detailed the past, explained his future views, and urged the immediate continuance of offensive operations. Nothing could be simpler—nothing more soldierly, than the plans he recommended. He proposed on the next morning to march to Mafra, and turn the French position at Torres Vedras. But, unhappily for England, a man had been sent out to mar the masterly dispositions of his predecessor. A true disciple of the Fabian school, delay seemed the leading object to be gained. Moore, he argued, might be expected in a few days upon the coast; but he forgot that these few days would have brought Wellesley to Lisbon. He urged that the cavalry were weak, the artillery badly horsed, and the risk that should be incurred of losing supplies by moving from the coast. It was in vain that Sir Arthur pointed out, in reply to all these objections, the impos-

his own insecurity. In a letter addressed to Col. Trant, on the 14th August, from Alcobaca, the startling danger to which Freire's obstinacy exposed him is clearly proved:—

“I should like to know what it is most probable he (Junot) will do, in case he should be either defeated by me, or retire, and leave me to march unmolested to Lisbon? He will fall upon that which is most justly called the *noyau* of the Portuguese army; the new foundation and hopes of the monarchy; which will as certainly be destroyed as it exists, if General Freire persists in adopting this plan of operations.

“Let him contemplate the relative strength of the two armies; and let him reflect upon the consequences of an action between General Junot and me. With his superiority of cavalry is it possible that, supposing I am successful in the action, they will not remain sufficiently unbroken to be able still to destroy that which General Freire commands; and will Junot thus have any other object? But General Freire reckons upon my pursuing Junot, and not allowing this misfortune to befall the Portuguese troops: so I will, when I shall be certain of the possession of Lisbon and the Tagus; but positively not till that moment.”—*Wellington Despatches.*

sibility of remaining quiet ; because if they did not advance to attack the enemy, the enemy would assuredly advance and attack them. It was in vain that he represented the great advantage which must arise from Sir John Moore landing in the Mondego, and cutting off Junot's retreat.* Sir Harry was not to be convinced. He remained obdurate to every argument employed to induce him to adopt the offensive ; and Wellesley returned to his camp, convinced " that the military incapacity of his superior officer would, when it paralyzed early success, as it did that of Rolica, entail upon the expedition ulterior disaster and disgrace. It was otherwise decreed—and the decision of an enemy wreathed the laurel on Wellesley's brow, of which the timidity of a feeble-minded colleague would have robbed him."

While the clear and vigorous appeal of Sir Arthur, had failed in rousing into action, one in whose mind " an inauspicious spirit of caution prevailed," Junot, to whom delay would have been as fatal as defeat, was preparing to strike the blow that Wellesley was so anxious to have anticipated. The French commander dare not remain inactive. He had scarcely provisions for a second day ; and it was dreaded, that every courier who arrived from the capital, would bring the unwelcome news that Lisbon was in arms. To fight, and not to manœuvre, was the only game for one to whom less evil would result from an immediate repulse, than good could be gained by a tardy victory. Accordingly, on the same evening on which Sir Harry Burrard had countermanded the advance of the British, Junot quitted his position, and after a tedious night-march, over broken roads and mountain passes, by seven o'clock on the morning of the 21st halted within four miles of the English pickets. Here, Junot formed his columns for attack ; and as the ground concealed his movements, his advanced cavalry had topped the high grounds, before the

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

British were apprised that they were on the eve of an engagement.

Before day-break, according to the custom of the English army, the troops were under arms, and consequently ready "for the fray." The French advanced pickets were promptly supported by their infantry brigades—column after column followed in order of battle—and with delight, Wellesley observed that the combat he had courted was unavoidable.

The relative force of the rival armies was pretty equal. The French consisted of three divisions of infantry, one of cavalry, and twenty-three guns of light calibre. Wellesley was stronger in infantry, equal in artillery, but in cavalry greatly inferior to his opponent. The preparatory dispositions were rapidly effected by the French general—a little before ten o'clock he commenced his attack, and the contest at Vimieiro opened.

It is a rare and valuable talent, which enables a lucid description of military localities and positions to be given in the briefest space—and that forms the chief excellence of the Duke of Wellington's correspondence. The details of the battle shall therefore be given in his own words. The despatch was addressed to Sir Harry Burrard, and dated—

" Vimieiro, 21st August, 1808.

" SIR,

" I have the honour to inform you that the enemy attacked us in our position at Vimieiro this morning.

" The village of Vimieiro stands in a valley, through which runs the river Maceira; at the back, and to the westward and northward of this village, is a mountain, the western point of which touches the sea, and the eastern is separated by a deep ravine from the heights, over which passes the road which leads from Lourinha, and the northward to Vimieiro. The greater part of the infantry, the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, and 8th brigades, were posted on this

mountain, with eight pieces of artillery; Major-General Hill's brigade being on the right, and Major-General Ferguson's on the left, having one battalion on the heights separated from the mountain. On the eastern and southern side of the town is a mill, which is entirely commanded, particularly on its right, by the mountain to the westward of the town, and commanding all the ground in the neighbourhood to the southward and eastward, on which Brigadier-General Fane was posted with his riflemen and the 50th regiment, and Brigadier-General Anstruther with his brigade, with half a brigade of six-pounders, and half a brigade of nine-pounders, which had been ordered to the position in the course of last night. The ground, over which passes the road from Lourinha, commanded the left of this height, and it had not been occupied, excepting by a picket, as the camp had been taken up only for one night, and there was no water in the neighbourhood of this height.

“The cavalry and the reserve of artillery were in the valley, between the hills on which the infantry stood, both flanking and supporting Brigadier-General Fane's advanced guard.

“The enemy first appeared about eight o'clock in the morning, in large bodies of cavalry, on our left, upon the heights on the road to Lourinha; and it was soon obvious that the attack would be made upon our advanced guard, and the left of our position; and Major-General Ferguson's brigade was immediately moved across the ravine to the heights on the road to Lourinha, with three pieces of cannon; he was followed successively by Brigadier-General Nightingale, with his brigade, and three pieces of cannon; Brigadier-General Acland and his brigade; and Brigadier-General Bowes, with his brigade. These troops were formed (Major-General Ferguson's brigade in the first line, Brigadier-General Nightingale's in the second, and Brigadier-General Bowes's and Acland's in columns in the rear) on those heights, with their right upon the valley, which

leads into Vimieiro, and their left upon the other ravine, which separates these heights from the range which terminates at the landing place at Maceira. On the last-mentioned heights the Portuguese troops, which had been in the bottom near Vimieiro, were posted in the first instance, and they were supported by Brigadier-General Craufurd's brigade.

"The troops of the advanced guard, on the heights to the southward and eastward of the town, were deemed sufficient for its defence; and Major-General Hill was moved to the centre of the mountain, on which the great body of the infantry had been posted, as a support to these troops, and as a reserve to the whole army; in addition to this support, these troops had that of the cavalry in the rear of their right.

"The enemy's attack began in several columns upon the whole of the troops on this height; on the left, they advanced, notwithstanding the fire of the riflemen, close to the 50th regiment, and they were checked and driven back only by the bayonets of that corps. The second battalion, 43d regiment, was likewise closely engaged with them in the road which leads into Vimieiro, a part of that corps having been ordered into the churchyard, to prevent them from penetrating into the town. On the right of the position they were repulsed by the bayonets of the 97th regiment, which corps was successfully supported by the second battalion of the 52d, which, by an advance in column, took the enemy in flank.

"Besides this opposition given to the attack of the enemy on the advanced guard by their own exertions, they were attacked in flank by Brigadier-General Acland's brigade, in its advance to its position on the heights on the left; and a cannonade was kept up on the flank of the enemy's columns by the artillery on those heights.

"At length, after a most desperate contest, the enemy was driven back in confusion from this attack, with the loss of seven pieces of cannon, many prisoners, and a great

number of officers and soldiers killed, and wounded, He was pursued by a detachment of the 20th light dragoons, but the enemy's cavalry were so much superior in numbers that this detachment suffered much, and Lieut.-Colonel Taylor was unfortunately killed.

“ Nearly at the same time the enemy's attack commenced upon the heights, on the road to Lourinha ; this attack was supported by a large body of cavalry, and was made with the usual impetuosity of French troops. It was received with steadiness by Major-General Ferguson's brigade, consisting of the 36th, 40th, and 71st regiments, and these corps charged as soon as the enemy approached them, who gave way, and they continued to advance upon him, supported by the 82d, one of the corps of Brigadier-General Nightingale's brigade, which, as the ground extended, afterwards formed a part of the first line by the 29th regiment, and by Brigadier-General Bowes's and Acland's brigades ; whilst Brigadier-General Craufurd's brigade and the Portuguese troops, in two lines, advanced along the height on the left. In the advance of Major-General Ferguson's brigade six pieces of cannon were taken from the enemy, with many prisoners, and vast numbers were killed and wounded. The enemy afterwards made an attempt to recover part of his artillery, by attacking the 71st and 82d regiments, which were halted in a valley in which it had been taken. These regiments retired from the low grounds in the valley to the heights, where they halted, faced about, and fired, and advanced upon the enemy, who had by that time arrived in the low ground, and they thus obliged him again to retire with great loss.

“ In this action, in which the whole of the French force in Portugal was employed, under the command of the Duke d'Abrantes in person, in which the enemy was certainly superior in cavalry and artillery, and in which not more than half of the British army was actually engaged, he has sustained a signal defeat ; and has lost thirteen pieces of cannon, twenty-three ammunition waggons, with

powder, shells, stores of all descriptions, and 20,000 rounds of musket ammunition. One general officer has been wounded (Brennier) and taken prisoner, and a great many officers and soldiers have been killed, wounded, and taken."

The French attacks were separately made, but they were nearly simultaneous. Laborde, who commanded the left wing, consisting of five thousand men, moved along the valley, to carry the eminence on which the advanced brigade of Wellesley's army was in position. The village and churchyard were strongly occupied by British light troops, and part of the 43d—while seven pieces of artillery opened with Shrapnell shells upon the column, as it came on with all the imposing steadiness for which French troops are so distinguished. The fire of the British skirmishers, who were extended along the front of the plateau, wherever trees or banks would cover them, was also particularly destructive. Unshaken by the cannonade, the enemy pressed forward, and, mounting the hill, boldly confronted the British 50th, who, with a company of the 95th, were formed on the crest. That gallant regiment waited until their opponents had nearly crowned the height, when, after delivering a shattering volley at thirty paces distance, they rushed forward with the bayonet, and broke through the angle of the column. The French at first offered a stout resistance, but they were driven from the field with great slaughter. A separate attack made on the village by a French corps, who had advanced on the right of the large column, was defeated by Acland's brigade; while a squadron of the 20th light dragoons charged Laborde's disordered ranks, and the rout of the enemy was completed. Nearly one thousand of the enemy were left upon the field, and seven guns and three hundred prisoners were taken.

The pursuit of the routed enemy was continued for a considerable distance, until their reserved cavalry, under

Margaron, checked the small but gallant band of British dragoons: who, now obliged to yield to numbers, were driven back with heavy loss, in which, unfortunately, their brave leader, Lieut.-Colonel Taylor, was included.* A small column under Brennier, which had supported Laborde's attack by a flank movement on his left, had no better fortune. Anstruther's brigade charged it furiously with the bayonet, and the French were repulsed with considerable loss.†

Kellerman, with the French grenadiers, who formed the reserve, made a desperate effort to recover the day. Advancing to the height, he drove in the advanced companies of the 43d; but that regiment rallied instantly, and while the head of the enemy's column was shaken by the fire of the English artillery, the 43d came gallantly forward, and, after a short but sanguinary contest, drove the French grenadiers from the ridge, at the bayonet's point.

The left of the British position was also furiously assailed by Solignac's division, which had advanced along the mountain ridge. They found the British 36th, 40th, and 71st, formed in three lines, and ready to receive them; but they deployed with uncommon quickness, and on both sides several murderous volleys were interchanged. The 82d and 29th came also into action; and a sweeping fire from the English guns was vigorously maintained. Nothing could shake the steadiness of the British infantry; and, alarmed by a threatening movement of the fifth brigade, and Portuguese, who were seen marching rapidly towards Lourinha, the French fell back. But in turn they were fiercely assailed; and, as the mountain brow opened out, the regiments of

* "He was shot through the heart whilst leading a brilliant charge which his detachment made; and in which, after committing terrible havoc among the enemy's infantry, it suddenly found itself beset by a whole brigade of French cavalry."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

† "An aide-de-camp of Sir Arthur's coming up to tell this General (Anstruther) that a corps should be sent to his assistance, he replied, "Sir, I am not pressed, and I want no assistance; I am beating the French, and am able to beat them wherever I find them."—*Southey*.

Ferguson's second line came up at double quick, formed line, and took part in the combat. The word to charge was given. "One cheer, loud, regular, and appalling, warned the French of what they had to expect; but the French were men of tried valour, and they stood to the last. The onset that ensued was tremendous: the entire front rank of the enemy perished; and the men who composed it were found, at the close of the action, lying on the very spots where each, during its continuance, had stood."* Broken completely, the French rapidly retreated, leaving the ground to the conquerors, with six pieces of artillery. General Solignac was severely wounded, and carried off the field—and outflanked and driven into the low grounds about Perinza, the capture of the greater portion of the retiring column seemed now a certainty.

About this period of the battle, Brennier, who had got his brigade entangled in a ravine that protected the British left, and consequently had failed in supporting Laborde's attack on Anstruther, managed to extricate himself from the difficulty into which, from ignorance of the ground, he had involved himself; and, in retreating, suddenly came upon the 71st and 82d regiments, who were in charge of the captured guns, and resting after their late exertions, to be enabled to come forward when required. Taken by surprise, the two regiments retired to re-form, and Brennier recovered the cannon. Instantly, however, on gaining the high ground, they rallied and advanced again; threw in a well-directed volley, lowered their bayonets, and with a loud huzza, came forward to the charge.† But the French wanted nerve to stand it—they broke—the guns were once more seized—and, with the loss of their general,

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

† The piper of the grenadier company of the 71st, when knocked down by a musket shot in the thigh, refused to quit the field, and sitting on a knapsack struck up a pibroch, observing, "De'il hae his soul gin the lads wanted music." The Highland Society presented Stewart with a beautiful stand of pipes, bearing a complimentary inscription.

who was wounded and made prisoner,* the French retreated in great disorder.

Such was the state of the field,—Solignac and Brennier's brigades separated and disorganized, while, flushed with conquest, Ferguson's success must have proved decisive,—when the paralyzing order to "halt," issued by a British general, effected for the beaten enemy a miraculous deliverance, from what themselves considered inevitable destruction. The opportunity was promptly seized. Covered by a fine cavalry, the relics of the French infantry rallied and reformed with a rapidity that did infinite credit to their discipline; and then commencing a soldierly retreat, they united themselves with the shattered masses, who were retiring in great disorder, after their failure upon the British centre.

Sir Harry Burrard, who had been fortunately absent while the dispositions for the action were made, and, arriving on the ground during the heat of battle, had not ventured to interfere previously, now assumed the chief command. A decisive victory was won. Every effort of Junot's had been exhausted; every arm of his troops had been bravely but uselessly employed; and Brennier's anxious inquiry, when brought into the presence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, "Whether Kellerman had charged?" showed that the whole of his reserve had been brought into action, and, of course, that no resources were in hand. It was not yet noon: the French were in full retreat; half their artillery taken, and nothing but their cavalry effective. With the British army matters stood differently: the Portuguese had not been called upon; the first and fifth brigades had never been engaged, and the former were actually two miles nearer Torres Vedras than the French.

* Brennier was in imminent danger of being bayoneted, and was saved by a corporal of the 71st. called Mackay. He offered the Highlander his watch, but it was refused, and the French general was safely conducted to Colonel Pack, who commanded the regiment. Mackay was immediately made serjeant, and the Highland Society presented him with a gold medal.

The fourth and eighth brigades had suffered very few casualties, were quite fresh, and ready for any exertion that might have been required from them. In the morning, numbers were in favour of the British; at noon, how much more was this advantage improved! Nothing was wanted but to follow up the victory, and by forcing Junot on the Tagus, push forward direct to Montachique, by Torres Vedras, and thus cut off the French retreat upon the capital. By advancing, Wellesley must have obliged Junot to abandon the few guns he had carried off, and leave his wounded and stragglers* to their fate, while he sought refuge in Elvas or Almeida. Of course Sir Arthur Wellesley saw the glorious results his success was sure to realize, and Lisbon appeared already in possession. What must have been his mortification, when Sir Harry Burrard issued the fatal order; and, deaf to every remonstrance, "urged upon the field with the warmth and earnestness of a successful officer," the advice of Wellesley was disregarded, and the British army, to their great astonishment, were directed to halt and pile arms! †

While his imbecile superior had thus arrested Wellesley's career of glory for a season, Junot, after withdrawing his beaten corps, and sustaining well the high character he had acquired for personal intrepidity, by the recklessness with which he exposed himself to danger‡ when affairs

* The Portuguese peasantry hung closely on the rear of the armies, and, when occasion offered, plundered the dead and dying, and treated the disabled French with great inhumanity. At night they continued roaming over the field, and a strong British guard was required to protect the prisoners from the fury of the rabble.

† "It has been reported, I know not with what truth, that the illustrious Wellington, after delivering his military opinions on the field of Vimieiro, from which the enemy was retiring defeated and discomfited, and after hearing the decision of Sir Harry Burrard, turned his horse's head, and, with a cold and contemptuous bitterness, said aloud to his aide-de-camp, 'You may think about dinner, for there is nothing more for soldiers to do this day.'"—*Reminiscences of the Peninsula*.

‡ "The Duke of Abrantes, who had displayed all that reckless courage to which he originally owed his elevation, profited by this unexpected cessation

became disastrous, called a council of war to consider the course that, under existing circumstances, he should now pursue. Apprised that Lisbon was not secure from insurrection for an hour, short of ammunition, and damped by a signal defeat, the situation of the French army was perilous in the extreme. To force their way over the frontier, and join the next corps in Spain, was almost a desperate alternative; and the decision of Junot's generals was unanimous,—that negotiation should be resorted to. Kellerman was accordingly despatched to the British camp—and, as the event proved, an abler functionary could not have been selected.

In the interim, Sir Hew Dalrymple had arrived and taken the direction of affairs;—and thus, in the brief space of four-and-twenty hours, the command of the British army had thrice changed hands. It is, however, but justice to Sir Hew Dalrymple to state, that on being informed that Sir Arthur Wellesley had landed and was engaged in active operations, with proper delicacy he resolved to run down to Mondego, there wait for the expected reinforcements, and, in the mean time, permit Sir Arthur to carry out the plans he had so ably and successfully commenced; “but receiving a vague account of the action at Rolica from a sloop of war, he sent an aide-de-camp on shore for intelligence, ordering him to inform Sir Arthur, if he chanced to see him, that he was proceeding to fall in with Sir Harry Burrard and the main body; and that though he wished to be informed of the proceedings, he did not mean to interfere with his command. This was on the evening of the 21st. About midnight the boat returned, bringing intelligence of the battle, and that Sir Harry Burrard was in command. There was now no room for that delicacy

of the battle, and re-formed his broken infantry. Twelve hundred fresh men joined him at the close of the contest, and, covered by his cavalry, he retreated with order and celerity, until he regained the command of the pass of Torres Vedras, so that when the day closed, the relative position of the two armies was the same as on the evening before.”—*Napier*.

towards Sir Arthur, as honourable as it was judicious,"*—and Sir Hew landed accordingly.

The mischief had been already done:—had Wellesley been allowed to follow up his successes, not a reasonable doubt exists but Lisbon must have fallen; but Sir Harry Burrard's unhappy interference had robbed victory of its value; Junot had ample time to repair his disaster; there were many excellent positions between Vimiero and the capital, and Elvas and Almeida were open to receive him, should he cross the Tagus. The equinox was at hand, and an army dependent on a fleet for its supplies had every thing to dread, while landings were to be made on such a rock-bound coast as that of Portugal. The tide of fortune had been suffered to ebb; the fatal error of Sir Harry Burrard was not to be recovered; and, in the exercise of a sound judgment, Sir Arthur Wellesley consented to an armistice, which the incapacity of his superior officers had now rendered advisable.

In alluding to the action, Sir Arthur did ample justice to the merits of both his officers and men:—"I cannot say too much in favour of the troops; their gallantry and their discipline were equally conspicuous; and I must add, that this is the only action I have ever been in, in which every thing passed as it was directed, and no mistake was made by any of the officers charged with its conduct."†

But no enemy in defeat, could sustain the high reputation that years of conquest had bestowed upon them, better than Junot's troops at Vimiero. A braver field was never won; and throughout the day the French behaved like men whose battles had ever terminated in victories. All fought most gallantly; and the grenadiers, who formed the reserve, elicited the admiration of their opponents, by the

* This delicacy on Sir Hew's part appears never to have been notified to Sir Arthur Wellesley; for at the Court of Inquiry, afterwards held in England, Sir Arthur, in alluding to it, observed, "I can assure the Court that yesterday was the first time I heard of it."

† Wellington Despatches.

determination with which they pushed through a cross fire of grape and musketry, when advancing to the heights, from which the bayonets of the British only could drive them back. No wonder that the slaughter was commensurate with the obstinacy of the combat; and when the numbers are considered, the casualties will appear immense. The enemy brought some twelve or thirteen thousand men into action; and by a moderate estimate they lost almost a fourth. The British casualties were much lighter, amounting in the whole to not eight hundred *hors-de-combat*.* To ascertain Junot's actual loss is difficult. The French returns † are always notoriously erroneous; and when it is remembered that their attacks were made in close column, and that their advance was always exposed to a sweeping fire of the British guns, and reserved volleys of musketry from the infantry, it may be easily imagined that the slaughter must have been consequently great.

Immediately on assuming the command, ascertaining the state of the British army, and obtaining from Sir Arthur Wellesley a brief but clear explanation of recent operations, Sir Hew determined to advance, and orders to that effect were issued. But the moment for successful action had passed away, and in military affairs a lost

* Return of killed, wounded, and missing of the British army, on the 21st of August, 1808 :—

Officers.			Non-commis. Officers and Drummers.			Rank & File.			Horses.			Total Officers, Non-commis. Officers, Drummers, Rank & File, Killed, Wounded, and Missing.	Total Horses Killed, Wounded, and Missing.
Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.		
4	37	2	3	31		128	466	46	30	12	1	720	43

† Thiebault, the French adjutant-general, states their loss at 1800, and returns the troops actually combatant at 9000; while a French order of battle, found upon the field, makes the effective strength of Junot 12,000 infantry, and 1300 cavalry.

opportunity can rarely be recalled. What results might have arisen from the dispositions of Sir Hew were fated to remain matters of conjecture; for Kellerman, with a suitable escort of cavalry, arrived at the British outposts, and was immediately conducted to the quarters of the British General.



CHAPTER XXII.

AN ARMISTICE CONCLUDED—SPECULATIONS IN THE ENGLISH CAMP—JUNOT
RETIRES TO LISBON—THE CONVENTION—SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY OPPOSED
TO SEVERAL OF ITS ARTICLES—SIR CHARLES COTTON REFUSES HIS CON-
SENT—MEMORANDUM FOR THE GUIDANCE OF COLONEL MURRAY—COM-
MUNICATION TO LORD CASTLEREAGH—ADDRESS TO SIR ARTHUR WEL-
LESLEY—HIS REPLY—PRIVATE LETTER—MILITARY MEMORANDUM.

It caused no slight alarm to the outlying pickets, when Kellerman's escort at first appeared, but it was immediately ascertained that the object of the visit was pacific; the French general being the bearer of a proposition for a suspension of arms, as a preparatory step to the evacuation of Portugal by the invaders. An armistice for forty-eight hours was concluded; and a negotiation, than which none was afterwards more extensively canvassed nor more differently estimated, commenced, which ended in what was termed the Convention of Cintra.

The arrival of Kellerman at the British camp occasioned an intense curiosity, both as to the nature of the proposals which he bore, and the reception they were likely to meet with. Conjecture was busily employed; some asserting that Sir Arthur Wellesley was hostile to any armistice whatever; while others affirmed, that he was so deeply disgusted with Burrard's weakness, in preventing the victory of the 21st from being followed up, that he had expressed himself as being totally indifferent to what ulterior measures Sir Hew and Sir Harry might adopt.—

"Murmurs might here and there be heard, all of them condemnatory of that excess of caution which had checked a victorious army in the midst of its career; whilst a thousand wishes were expressed, that the new chief's arrival had been delayed till the campaign, so prosperously begun, had been brought to a conclusion."*

In the mean time, Junot had retired to Lisbon, having taken up two strong positions at the Cabeça de Montechique and Mafra. While the late events had been in progress, the most delusory accounts were transmitted to the capital, and there promulgated by the French authorities, all detailing imaginary victories which had been gained already, as well as those which were shortly to be won. But, on the evening of the 23d, intelligence of the defeat at Vimiero reached Lisbon, with the usual exaggerations; and its effect was so visible in undisguised demonstrations of joy to which the inhabitants gave expression, that an immediate insurrection was momentarily dreaded. Still an attempt was made to blind the populace; and when Junot arrived late in the afternoon with the reserve, a royal salute was fired in honour of his victory; but the farce could not be sustained, and the return of Kellerman, accompanied by Colonel Murray, confirmed the report that Junot had actually proposed to capitulate.

The celebrated Convention was eventually brought to a conclusion. It contained twenty-two articles, to which three additional ones were subsequently affixed. It was signed at Lisbon, on the 30th of August, by General Kellerman and the Quarter-Master-General, Colonel Murray. The conditions were the following:—

"Art. 1. All the places and forts in the kingdom of Portugal, occupied by the French troops, shall be delivered up to the British army, in the state in which they are at the period of the signature of the present Convention.

"Art. 2. The French troops shall evacuate Portugal

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

with their arms and baggage: they shall not be considered as prisoners of war; and on their arrival in France they shall be at liberty to serve.

“Art. 4. The English government shall furnish the means of conveyance for the French army, which shall be disembarked in any of the ports of France between Rochefort and L'Orient inclusively.

“Art. 4. The French army shall carry with it all its artillery of French calibre, with the horses belonging to it, and the tumbrils supplied with sixty rounds per gun. All other artillery, arms, and ammunition, as also the military and naval arsenal, shall be given up to the British army and navy, in the state in which they may be at the period of the ratification of the Convention.

“Art. 5. The French army shall carry with it all its equipments, and all that is comprehended under the name of property of the army; that is to say, its military chest, and the carriages attached to the field commissariat and field hospital; or be permitted to dispose of any part of the same, as individuals might of private property.”

Art. 6 provided for the embarkation of the horses of the cavalry, as well as those of general and other officers; troop horses being limited to 600, and staff horses to 200. Art. 7 arranged the plan of embarkation; Art. 8, specially referring to that of the garrisons of Elvas, Peniche, and Palmella. Art. 9 provided for the care of the sick and wounded; Art. 10, for the security of the transports employed. Art. 11 determined the relative positions of the English and French armies, pending the embarkation of the latter. Art. 12 referred to the order in which the different fortresses were to be given up to the British. Art. 13 referred to the appointment of commissaries on both sides; and Art. 14 provided, that should a doubt arise in the meaning of any Article, it was to be explained favourably to the French. Art. 15 cancelled all arrears of contributions, requisitions, or claims, on the part of the French: and removed all sequestrations upon private property.

“ Art. 16. All subjects of France, or of powers in friendship or alliance with France, domiciliated in Portugal, or accidentally in this country, shall be protected. Their property of every kind, movable and immovable, shall be respected; and they shall be at liberty either to accompany the French army or to remain in Portugal; in either case their property is guaranteed to them, with the liberty of retaining or disposing of it, and passing the sale thereof into France, or any other country where they may fix their residence; the space of one year being allowed for that purpose.

“ It is fully understood that shipping is excepted from this arrangement, only, however, in so far as regards leaving the port; and that none of the stipulations above mentioned can be made the pretext of any commercial speculation.

“ Art. 17. No native of Portugal shall be rendered accountable for his political conduct during the period of the occupation of this country by the French army; and all those who have continued in the exercise of their employments, or who have accepted situations under the French government, are placed under the protection of the British commanders; they shall sustain no injury in their persons or property, it not having been at their option to be obedient or not to the French government.”

Art. 18 secured the liberation of the Spanish troops confined on ship-board in the port of Lisbon; and a restoration of such French subjects, military or civil, not taken in battle, but detained in consequence of the occurrences of the 29th of May, and days following. Art. 19 provided for an exchange of prisoners; Art. 20, for an interchange of hostages; Art. 21, for transmission of the Convention to France; and Art. 22 contained an assurance that the British Admiral should be requested to accommodate Junot and his chief officers with passages in ships of war.

To these, three additional Articles were subjoined. By

the first, persons in the civil employments of the French army were to be restored without exchange. The second provided that the French army should be subsisted from its own magazines, up to the day of embarkation, and the garrisons to the days on which they evacuated the forts. The third, engaged that the British General should re-establish a "free circulation of the means of subsistence between the country and the capital." Such were the provisions of a Convention, which in England met with the disapprobation of all, from the king to the peasant.

It would be now a dry and useless narrative, to detail the progress of the negotiation from its opening at Vimi-ero, until it was ratified at Lisbon. To many of its provisions objections were urged by Sir Arthur Wellesley. To the ill-defined article respecting "the property" which the French should be allowed to take away, a stipulation that the port of Lisbon should be considered neutral, and a permission given to the Russian fleet to return to the Baltic, Sir Arthur gave his decided opposition. The former, Kellerman explained as meaning "the military baggage and equipments" of his army—and as the latter met the strongest disapprobation of the British admiral, it was finally disallowed. On another and most important point, Sir Arthur was also at issue in opinion with the generals in command; namely, the duration of the armistice—Sir Arthur insisting that it should be limited to eight-and-forty hours, while Sir Hew assented to Kellerman's proposition—that it was to be considered unlimited until either party should declare it ended; and that, in such event, forty-eight hours should elapse before hostilities recommenced. The opposite views taken by Sir Hew Dalrymple from Sir Arthur Wellesley, appear to have arisen from a strange want of confidence in his own strength and resources, and consequently, in a wish to procrastinate until Sir John Moore could land and join him; whereas, a very little consideration must have convinced Sir Hew, that Junot was radically weak, or, with possession of the capital, the Tagus, and the

forts, he never would have stooped to propose a suspension of arms.

On being acquainted with the absurd demand made by Junot regarding the integrity of the Russian fleet, the British admiral returned a prompt and peremptory refusal; and Sir Arthur Wellesley seized that as a fitting opportunity to end the armistice, and earnestly pressed Sir Hew to notify to the Duke of Abrantes that hostilities should recommence. Sir Arthur had prepared a paper to direct Colonel Murray in his communications with Sir Charles Cotton; and this memorandum is so extremely characteristic of the writer, and evinces how perfectly he understood the "*punica fides*" of the French, and the systematic rapacity of their commanders, that we give it entire.

"Ramahal, 23d August, 1808.

" I. It would be very desirable to instruct Colonel Murray, at an early hour this day, to urge the admiral to have communication with the Russian admiral, in which the latter should be informed, that whatever might be the result of the negotiations between Sir Hew and the Duc d'Abrantes, the Russian fleet should not be molested if they conducted themselves as they ought in a neutral port, and took no part in the contest.

" II. If the admiral should consent to this arrangement in favour of the Russians, and the Russians should be satisfied upon this point, the French Commander-in-Chief should be pressed upon the following points in the negotiation for the Convention.

" 1st. The fort of Peniche to be evacuated in two days; the forts of Elvas and La Lippe in four days; the fort of Almeida in five days. The French army to cross the Tagus, and evacuate Lisbon, and all the forts on the Tagus, in four days from the signature of the Convention; and to be prepared to embark in seven days, or as soon afterwards as the British Commander-in-Chief may appoint.

The British army, in the mean time, to have the use of the port of Lisbon, and the navigation of the Tagus.

"2dly. The mode of paying for the hire of the transports to be settled.

"3dly. The ports to be settled to which they are to go. Rochefort or L'Orient would answer best, as being the greatest distance from Spain and the Austrian frontier.

"4thly. Security to be required for the transports going to the ports appointed, and for the return of the transports; as fifty of those sent with the army of Egypt were detained in France.

"5thly. Some mode to be devised to make the French generals disgorge the church plate which they have stolen.

"6thly. An exchange of prisoners to be settled.

"7thly. There are no horse transports; and the French must be permitted to leave commissaries to sell their horses, or to hire vessels to transport them to France, but certainly not the cavalry itself."

Sir Arthur did not conceal his opinions from the government at home, either with respect to the Convention before it was signed, or the general prospects of the British interests in Portugal. In a letter to Lord Castlereagh, dated the 30th of August, he observes:—

"Ten days after the action of the 21st, we are not farther advanced; nor indeed, I believe, so far advanced as we should and ought to have been on the night of the 21st.

"I assure you, my dear Lord, matters are not prospering here; and I feel an earnest desire to quit the army. I have been too successful with this army ever to serve with it in a subordinate situation, with satisfaction to the person who shall command it, and of course not to myself. However, I shall do what the government may wish."

If Sir Arthur Wellesley felt dissatisfied with the measures adopted by those who had superseded him in

the command, the disgust generally produced throughout the army, by the infelicitous appointments of the government, was "deep, not loud." From the moment the fatal order of the 21st was issued, the troops reposed no confidence in their new leaders; and even to the youngest soldier, the incompetency of Sir Harry and Sir Hew was perfectly apparent. All regretted that operations commenced under such glorious promise, should be stripped of their results, and terminate in diplomacy and inaction; while, aware of the loss the army and the country had sustained, when their late commander's talents had been placed in abeyance for a season, the general officers took an early opportunity of marking the high estimation in which Sir Arthur Wellesley was held; and on the 3d of September the following address was presented to him:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Camp at St. Antonio de Tojal.

"Anxious to manifest the high esteem and respect we bear towards you, and the satisfaction we must ever feel in having had the good fortune to serve under your command, we have this day directed a piece of plate, value 1000 guineas, to be prepared and presented to you.

"The enclosed inscription, which we have ordered to be engraved on it, expresses our feelings on this occasion.

"We have the honour to be, &c.

"B. SPENCER, Major-Gen.

"R. HILL, Major-Gen.

"R. FERGUSON, Major-Gen.

"M. NIGHTINGALE, Brig.-Gen.

"B. F. BOWES, Brig.-Gen.

"H. FANE, Brig.-Gen.

"J. CATLIN CRAUFURD, Brig.-Gen."

"Lieut.-Gen. the Hon. Sir A. Wellesley, K.B." .

INSCRIPTION.

"From the General Officers serving in the British army, originally landed in Figueira, in Portugal, in the year 1808, to Lieut.-General the Right Hon. Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B. &c. &c. their Commander.

"Major-General Spencer, second in command, Major-Generals Hill and Ferguson, Brig.-Generals Nightingale, Bowes, Fane, and Craufurd, offer this gift to their leader, in testimony of the high respect and esteem they feel for him as a man, and the unbounded confidence they place in him as an officer."

To this flattering testimonial of private and professional respect, Sir Arthur returned a suitable reply.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I have had the honour of receiving your letter of this day; and I assure you that it is a source of great gratification to me to find that my conduct in the command, with which I was lately entrusted by his Majesty, has given you satisfaction.

"As my efforts were directed to forward the service in which we were employed, I could not fail to receive your support and assistance; and to the cordial support, and friendly advice and assistance, which I invariably received from you collectively and individually, I attribute the success of our endeavours to bring the army in the state in which it was formed to meet the enemy, on the days on which the gallantry of the officers and soldiers was stimulated by your example, and their discipline aided and directed by your experience and ability.

"Under these circumstances, my task has been comparatively light, and I imagine that its difficulty has been overrated by your partiality; but I have a pride in the reflection, that as I should not deserve, so I should not possess your regard, if I had not done my duty; and with

these sentiments, and those of respect and affection for you all, I accept of that testimony of your esteem and confidence, which you have been pleased to present to me.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

“ ARTHUR WELLESLEY.”

That Sir Arthur every day had more reason to complain of the injustice done himself, and stronger cause to disapprove of the conduct of his superiors, will be readily inferred from his correspondence with the Secretary of State. In reply to a communication from Lord Castlereagh, the following letter was returned.

“ MY DEAR LORD,

“ *Zambujal, 5th Sept. 1808.*

“ You will receive from me by this opportunity a long letter upon our future operations. This relates solely to my private views. It is quite impossible for me to continue any longer with this army; and I wish, therefore, that you would allow me to return home and resume the duties of my office, if I should still be in office, and it is convenient to the Government that I should retain it; or, if not, that I should remain upon the staff in England; or, if that should not be practicable, that I should remain without employment. You will hear from others of the various causes which I must have for being dissatisfied, not only with the military and other public measures of the Commander-in-Chief, but with his treatment of myself. I am convinced it is better for him, for the army, and for me, that I should go away; and the sooner I go the better.

“ Since I wrote to you on the 30th, the Convention has been returned ratified by Junot, but materially altered. I understand that we have not a sufficiency of the Tagus to give us a secure harbour; we have not got the navigation of the river; and as we did not insist upon having Belem Castle, which was asked for by the alteration of the 29th, the transports cannot be watered without going into

that part of the river occupied by the Russians and the French troops; to which I understand the admiral will not consent. I have not seen the Convention, and I do not know what it contains.

“ Believe me, &c.

“ ARTHUR WELLESLEY.”

“ Viscount Castlereagh.”

On the 5th of September, Sir Arthur Wellesley addressed a letter to Lord Castlereagh, in reply to a wish expressed by the Secretary of State to obtain his (Sir Arthur's) opinions on the present position of affairs upon the Peninsula, and a statement of his views as to what probable results would attend ulterior operations. The application was answered by the annexed document; and probably a more sound and lucid paper never came from a statesman's pen. After premising that his means of information, regarding the position and numbers of the French, as well as the objects they had in view, were neither accurate nor extensive, and assuming that Bessiers might have 40,000 disposable troops, of which 5000 were cavalry, in Biscay and the neighbouring provinces, Sir Arthur proceeds to detail his own views. The statement as to the present was clear; the conjectures respecting the future, might be termed almost prophetic.

“ I really know nothing that they have in the shape of an army capable of meeting the French, excepting that under General Castanos. General Cuesta has some cavalry in Castille; General Galluzo some more in Estremadura; and Blake's army of Galicia may in time become an efficient corps. But these armies of peasantry, which in Murcia, Valencia, and Catalonia have cut up French corps, must not be reckoned upon (at least at present) as efficient armies to meet the French troops in the field. It is most probable that they will not, and indeed cannot, leave their provinces; and if they could, no officer could calculate a great operation upon such a body.

“I doubt not that, if an accurate report could be made upon their state, they want arms, ammunition, money, clothing, and military equipments of every description; and although such a body are very formidable and efficient in their own country, and probably equal to its defence, they must not be reckoned upon out of it; and in any case it is impossible to estimate the effect of their efforts. In some cases equal numbers will oppose with success the French troops; in others, 1000 Frenchmen, with cavalry and artillery, will disperse thousands of them; and no reliance can be placed on them in their present state.

“The result then of my information of the present state of the Spanish force to be opposed to the French is, that there are about 25,000 men under Castanos now ready, and about the same number under Blake in Galicia, upon whom you may reckon as efficient troops. All the rest may become so, and may be useful in different ways even at present; but you must not found the arrangement for a great military operation on their utility or efficiency. I understand that government has promised 10,000 men to Castanos; and I have no doubt whatever that a corps well equipped, consisting of about 15,000 men, including a proportion of British cavalry and artillery, would be highly useful to him. This would make his army 40,000 men, of which the British corps would be the best troops that could be found anywhere; and this army, aided by the insurrection from the other kingdoms of Spain, would be the operating army against what I have supposed to be the French operating army. This British corps should advance from Portugal, to which kingdom it would be in the mean time a defence.

“You should leave in Portugal a British corps of 5000 men, to be stationed at and in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, with probably a small garrison at Elvas. The object of stationing this corps in Portugal is to give strength to the government which you will establish here,

and to render it independent of the factions and intrigues by which it will be assailed on all sides.

“You ought to send to Lisbon, in the quality of king’s ambassador, a discreet person, who could superintend the management of the affairs of this country, particularly the expenditure of the money which you must supply for its wants, and its application to the purposes for which it will be given,—viz. to provide a military defence.

“The next consideration is the employment of the remainder of the army now in Portugal, amounting by estimate to about 10,000 men, with an additional corps of 10,000 men assembled and ready in England, and some cavalry. I acknowledge that I do not think the affairs of Spain are in so prosperous a state as that you can trust, in operation within that kingdom, the whole disposable force which England possesses, without adopting measures of precaution which will render its retreat to the sea-coast nearly certain. Besides this, I will not conceal from you that our people are so new in the field, that I do not know of persons capable of supplying, or if supplied of distributing, the supplies to an army of 40,000 men (British troops) acting together in a body. Even if plenty could be expected to exist, we should starve in the midst of it for want of due arrangement. But the first objection is conclusive. We may depend upon it, that whenever we shall assemble an army, the French will consider its defeat and destruction their first object, particularly if Buonaparte should be at the head of the French troops himself; and if the operations of our army should be near the French frontier, he will have the means of multiplying, and will multiply, the numbers upon our army in such a degree as must get the better of them. For the British army, therefore, we must have a retreat open, and that retreat must be the sea.

“Our operations carried on from Portugal and the north of Spain would, as you truly observe, involve us in a line

of operations much too long. The retreat would be difficult, if not impossible. This objection, you will say, would apply equally to the corps of 15,000 men proposed to be employed with Castanos. First, I conceive that there is a great deal of difference between the risk of the loss of such a corps as this, and that of the whole of the disposable force of Great Britain. Secondly, it does not follow that, because the whole British army could not make its retreat into Portugal, a corps of 15,000 could not. Thirdly, it does not follow that this corps of 15,000 men would necessarily retreat upon Portugal; being a part of Castano's army, it might retire with his troops into Andalusia, leaving the frontiers of Portugal to be defended by the Portuguese and the British corps of 5,000 men, till those, or a part of them, would again be brought round to the Tagus, or could enter Portugal by Algarve. I conclude, then, that although this corps might be risked, and its retreat to the sea should be considered in some degree *en l'air*, that of the whole disposable force of Great Britain ought to be, and must be, saved.

* * * * *

“ The only efficient plan of operations in which the British can be employed, consistently with this view (its secure retreat to the sea), is upon the flank and rear of the enemy's advance towards Madrid by the issue from the Asturias. If it be true, as is stated by the Asturian deputies in London, that their country is remarkably strong, and that it is secure from French invasion; if it be true that the ports of Santander and Gijon, the former particularly, are secure harbours in the winter; and if their walls can give to both or either the means of making an embarkation, even if the enemy should be able to pierce through the mountains, the Asturias is the country we should secure immediately, in which we should assemble our disposable force as soon as possible, and issue forth into the plains either by Leon, or the pass of Reynosa. The army could then have a short, although probably a

difficult communication with the sea, which must be carried on by mules, of which there are plenty in the country ; it could cooperate with Blake's Galician army, and could press upon the enemy's right flank and rear, and turn his position upon the Ebro, which it is evident he intends to make his first line. To secure the Asturias as soon as possible, you may depend upon it, is your first object in Spain ; and afterwards to assemble within this country your whole disposable force, after marching the detachment to Castanos.

" There are some points of detail which must be attended to in these arrangements. The army now in this country might either be marched into Leon ; or it might be embarked, and transported to Gijon or Santander. The latter would be the quickest operation ; by the adoption of the former, its artillery, in its present form, might accompany it ; but it must be recollected, that if the artillery should be kept in its present form, in case of retreat it must be left behind in the plains, as I understand there is no carriage-road across the mountains of Asturias.

" The troops now in the country ought to be embarked in the Tagus, and sent to the Asturias ; and ordnance carriages ought to be sent from England without loss of time, which can be taken to pieces, and carried by hand, or, when put together, can be drawn by horses. The reports, which will be made by officers sent to these countries, will state whether cavalry can pass through them. I think they might, as I see wherever a mule can go a horse can likewise. If so, the cavalry should likewise be landed in Asturias ; if not, the cavalry should be landed at Coruña, or Ferrol, and join the army in the plains, through the passes of Galicia, which we know are practicable for cavalry.

" There remains now to be considered only the operations of the Sicilian troops, consisting of 10,000 men. . . . If the Spaniards should be able to make any head against the French on the left of their line in Catalonia, and on

the Lower Ebro, this corps might reinforce that part of the Spanish insurrection, keeping its retreat always open to the sea. This, however, would be very difficult, the French being in possession of Barcelona; and probably the siege of that place, aided by the insurgents of Catalonia, would be the most this corps would perform. And whether the operation should be successfully concluded, or the corps should be forced to embark, in consequence of the approach of the stronger French force, it would materially aid the operations of the troops in the centre of Spain. The result of all these operations, which for the present must be distinct, would be to confine the French to their line of the Ebro for the present, and eventually to oblige them to retire upon their own frontier. Time would be gained for the further organization of the Spanish government and force; by the judicious and effectual employment of which, the British Government would be enabled to withdraw its troops from Spain, to employ them in other parts of Europe. As for preventing the retreat of the French from Spain, it is quite out of the question. They have possession of all the fortresses on this side of the Pyrenees, through which mountains there are not less than forty passes by which troops could march. Besides, if it were possible, under these circumstances, to place an army in their rear, with the object of cutting them off from France, you might depend upon it that all would rise as one man for their relief, and the result would be the loss of the army which should be so employed.

“In respect to your wish that I should go into the Asturias to examine the country, and form a judgment of its strength, I have to mention to you that I am not a draftsman, and but a bad hand at description. I should have no difficulty in forming an opinion and a plan for the defence of that country, provided I was certain that it would be executed. But it will be an idle waste of my time, and an imposition upon you, if I were to go into that

A A 2

country with the pretence of giving you, or any general officer you should employ there, an idea of the country; and it would be vain and fruitless to form a plan for the defence of the country which would depend upon the execution of another."



CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BRITISH CAMP—ADMIRAL'S DECISION RECEIVED—FEELINGS OF THE BRITISH ARMY—CONVENTION RATIFIED—FREIRE PROTESTS, INSTIGATED BY THE JUNTA OF OPORTO—GALUZZO INVESTS FORT LA LIPPE—ALMEIDA SURRENDERS—DISTURBANCES IN LISBON—APPOINTMENT OF BRITISH COMMISSIONERS—PLUNDER OF THE FRENCH—GENERAL HOPE'S PRECAUTIONS TO PRESERVE THE PUBLIC PEACE—PORTUGUESE FEELINGS TOWARDS THE FRENCH GENERALS—LIBERATION OF THE SPANISH PRISONERS—THEY ARE SENT TO CATALONIA—EMBARKATION OF THE FRENCH—LETTERS TO LORD CASTLEREAGH, SIR JOHN MOORE, SIR HEW DALRYMPLE, AND COLONEL MURRAY.

WHILE the Convention was still incomplete, awaiting the decision of the British admiral, the English camp was every day filled with idle rumours; and all were kept in anxious suspense, as to the termination of this unfortunate diplomacy. "Officers of every rank met together, indeed, in coteries, to indulge in an occupation, to which soldiers upon active service are peculiarly prone, namely, speculation as to the future; and couriers came in from time to time, with despatches of greater or less moment, from different parts of the country. But neither the speculations on the one hand, nor the despatches on the other, proved worthy of being recorded at length, though they were not without interest at the moment."* When all were in the highest excitement, the answer of the admiral was received; and as his refusal to acknowledge the neutrality of the Tagus, or allow the Russian fleet to quit that harbour for any destination but a British port, was peremptorily expressed, it was believed, from

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

the haughty tone that Junot had assumed, that all hope of an amicable adjustment was ended, and that hostilities would immediately recommence.

The joy that Sir Charles Cotton's decision occasioned, might have sufficiently indicated to the British Commander-in-chief, how little his pacific diplomacy was in unison with the feelings of his troops. All in the camp looked forward for the expiration of the armistice with impatience; and when it was intimated that the army should parade next morning in marching order, it was considered certain that active operations were about to be resumed without delay. The arrival of Sir John Moore at this crisis in Maceira Bay, seemed the only circumstance wanted to insure the rejection of all further negotiation; and although the tempestuous weather had rendered it impossible as yet to disembark the troops, an abatement of the gale might at this season of the year have been reasonably expected—and then the line of Torres Vedras was open to Sir John's corps when landed. The intended plan of operations was publicly discussed. Sir Arthur Wellesley, it was believed, would advance by his left from Ramahal to Bucellas, and turn the heights of Cabeza—the Portuguese, moving by the coast-road, should occupy Mafra; and thus assailed, and threatened on three quarters, Junot must have risked a battle, or retired into Lisbon, where a close blockade would have produced an unconditional surrender. But these proved only idle speculations—Junot was too well satisfied with the terms of the Convention, to allow the rejection of a single article to interrupt the completion of a treaty so favourable, in every sense, to the interests of the French. The stipulations regarding the Russian admiral and his fleet were, therefore, at once abandoned—the Convention ratified—and in the brief space of seventeen days, the first campaign in Portugal was closed.

It seemed that Sir Hew Dalrymple was fated, in his diplomatic arrangements, neither to give satisfaction to his

own government, nor to that which it was his chief object to support. Finding that the campaign was not to be terminated by the sword, but by the pen, Freire, who had hitherto conducted himself with perfect neutrality, inasmuch as he rendered no more assistance to the English than the French, now came forward, protesting against the Convention, and adding considerably to the embarrassments of the British generals. Freire, however, was but the tool of others. A troublesome and designing monk had become the leader of the Junta at Oporto; and wishing to hold the authority assumed for temporary purposes only, the bishop endeavoured to render permanent the power of the party he had attached himself to, and transfer the seat of government from Lisbon to the city where he held his see. Although the decision of Sir Hew Dalrymple prevented Freire from interrupting the Convention, his remonstrances against many of the articles, and the cabals of the Junta and the bishop, consummated with the Portuguese the unpopularity of the whole treaty: and the clamour abroad, was only exceeded by the more desperate outcry raised in Great Britain, against all concerned in effecting this detested measure.

It was not only, however, from the imbecile who commanded the Portuguese army that annoyance was to arise. A detachment of Spanish troops, commanded by General Galuzzo, had been assisting the Portuguese insurgents in the Alentejo. Little cordiality had existed between these partisans; for Galuzzo not only treated the Bishop of Oporto with personal disrespect, but actually plundered his military chest at Campo Mayor. On hearing that a Convention was signed, instead of obeying the orders he had received from the Spanish authorities to join the army concentrating behind the Ebro, with singular absurdity Galuzzo invested fort La Lippe, and refused to allow that article of the treaty to be carried into effect which referred to the surrender of that fortress. Girod, who commanded in La Lippe, despised the feeble efforts of this most con-

temptible besieger. Elvas lay beneath his guns; and he obliged that city to subsist his garrison, and close their gates against the Spaniards. Notwithstanding every remonstrance pointing out the absurdity of his conduct, Galuzzo obstinately persevered, until a division, under Sir John Hope, advanced as far as Estremos, to remove the Spanish corps, if necessary, by actual force. This proceeding had the desired effect—the fortress was evacuated, and the garrison, escorted by the 52d light infantry, marched for embarkation to Lisbon.

The fortress of Almeida was promptly given up, and the French garrison conducted to Oporto to take shipping. Nothing could surpass the ferocity of the inhabitants; and all the exertions of the British escort were barely sufficient to prevent the unfortunate soldiers from being butchered. But although every effort on the part of their protectors was strenuously used, many of the French were assassinated, and the whole of their baggage seized upon and plundered by the mob.

Meanwhile Lisbon was in a fearful state. The city was overrun by a ferocious mob; and murder and robbery occurred at all hours, as there was no native police to prevent the commission of crimes, of which the French took no cognizance whatever. But though careless as to the security of the inhabitants, Junot took the strongest measures to protect his own soldiers during this excitement of the populace; and the French sentries had orders to fire upon any persons who approached their posts—an order they obeyed to the letter.

Two British commissioners had been appointed, namely, Major-General Beresford and Lord Proby, to carry into effect the provisions of the Convention; and immense difficulty was occasioned by the unblushing pertinacity with which the French endeavoured to remove from the country the plunder they had acquired. Every institution, civil or religious, had been despoiled—the treasury, museum, library, convents, arsenals, and churches, all had shared the

same fate, and all had been denuded of every thing that was valuable and portable. The Deposito Publico—a place where litigated monies were banked, pending the decision of the causes—was stripped of 22,000*l.*; and the horses of the Prince Regent, the carriages of the Duke of Sussex, and the pictures of the Marquis Angeja, were actually being removed by an aide-de-camp, as the property of General Junot, when the commissioners interfered, and insisted on their restitution. Some idea may be formed of the extent of French spoliation, when, notwithstanding all the property which was abandoned, their military chest was taken off with three months' pay; and one regiment alone, was computed to have brought away one hundred thousand crowns. Plunder must have been extensive, if the means required for its transport be a test. Junot "demanded five ships to remove his own personal effects;"* a man, be it remembered, who entered Portugal with scarcely a change of linen!

General Hope, who had been appointed commandant of Lisbon, which he occupied with a division of the British army, was greatly instrumental by his firmness and activity, in preventing a popular outbreak of the most sanguinary character. The Monteiro Mor, with a rabble he called an army, had advanced to Azeitim, and addressed a most impertinent protest to the British admiral; while the Juiz de Povo published a similar document, teeming with invective against the French, to whom every crime was imputed.

Such language, from a magistrate, whose name was never heard but in turbulent times, increased the popular ferment—and General Hope issued a proclamation ordering the wine shops to be closed at six o'clock in the evening, and prohibiting the Portuguese from appearing armed in

* "Information was obtained that fifty-three boxes of indigo were embarked as part of Junot's baggage; the indigo was found and seized. The French general, of course, disclaiming any knowledge of the transaction."—*Southey*.

the streets; while patrols were kept constantly on duty, to arrest any persons who should endanger the public tranquillity. The French generally kept their barracks, and nothing but the greatest vigilance of the British and French commanders prevented the people from gratifying their thirst for vengeance. Houses in which the French resided were marked during the night, and lists of persons supposed to have been in their confidence, were posted openly in the streets, and denounced for death; while the English were everywhere reproached, for affording protection to men, upon whom the Portuguese were now only waiting for an opportunity to exercise a sanguinary retaliation. Although the general feeling of the inhabitants of Lisbon towards the invaders was so ferocious, that it was unsafe for any person in a French uniform to be seen, there were several superior officers who fearlessly walked the streets. They had been honourable exceptions to a body who had treated the inhabitants with contempt, derided their religious prejudices, and plundered themselves, or effected their spoliations through the agency of others. Among this number were Travot, the late governor of Lisbon, Brennier, and Charlot—and even in the worst state of popular feeling these generals were treated with respect—while Junot and Loison were only saved from assassination by remaining in the midst of their soldiery, and Kellerman, but for the exertions of the British, would have fallen a victim to the fury of the mob.

One chief advantage, to which the framers of the Convention laid claim, was the liberation of the Spanish prisoners who were confined in hulks upon the Tagus. This was done amid cries of “Death to the French.” The ceremony to be observed on the occasion had been promulgated through the city, and immense crowds assembled to witness a spectacle, so interesting to a people just emancipated from thralldom themselves. “The Spaniards, in number about four thousand, assembled in a large open space called the Campo d’Ourique, and forming a hollow

square, with their generals and other officers in the centre, awaited the result. They were not kept long in suspense, ere General Beresford, to whom the arrangement of the ceremony had been entrusted, made his appearance. Instantly, General Beresford having passed along the line, and saluted, first the general, and afterwards the whole corps, presented to the former, with great grace and dignity, an elegant sword, and, in an animated speech, requested that the latter would again accept their arms from the king of England, never to lay them down till the cause of Ferdinand VII., of Europe, and of humanity had triumphed. This address, which was forcibly and well delivered, had not yet come to a close, when it was drowned in the reiterated Vivas of soldiers and inhabitants; whilst the roar of cannon, and the braying of trumpets, echoed from one end of Lisbon to the other. * * *

The whole concluded with a grand *déjeuné*, at which the Spanish officers became so intoxicated with wine and joy, as to dance waltzes and fandangos in their boots, swords, and complete field-equipments.* These troops, after being liberally supplied by the British Commander-in-chief with arms, horses, and ammunition, with 20,000 dollars for their immediate subsistence, were, at the express solicitation of deputies from the Junta, shipped on board English transports, and despatched to Catalonia.

On the 11th of September, the first division of the French army embarked under the protection of the second and third,—and next day they were in turn put on ship-board, and preserved as much as possible from insult or injury by a brigade of British troops. The citadel was instantly occupied by an English garrison, and Portugal declared to be now “unpolluted by a Frenchman’s foot.” Nothing could exceed the joy that the Portuguese exhibited at their deliverance: for nine nights and days the city was illuminated, the bells rang merrily, and all

* Lord Londonderry’s Narrative.

ranks appeared to have but one common feeling—the liveliest exultation at the departure of their oppressors.

While those occurrences were in progress, of which we have given a rapid sketch, Sir Arthur Wellesley found fresh reasons for disapproving of Sir Hew Dalrymple's proceedings. In a letter addressed to Lord Castlereagh, he thus expresses his feelings to the Secretary :—

*“ Zambriga, 12 miles N. of Lisbon,
“ 9th Sept. 1808.*

“ Your brother Charles is, I imagine, at Lisbon, and will make you acquainted with the state of affairs there. I write to you only in reference to the recommendation I made you some days ago, to appoint a proper person to be the king's ambassador there. Since I wrote that letter, I have heard so much of Lord Robert Fitzgerald, from various quarters, that I cannot avoid recommending you to turn your thoughts to him. I am but little acquainted with him myself; but I hear an excellent character of him.

“ I fear that Sir Hew will make a mistake respecting the appointment of a regency in Lisbon. My intention was to have issued a proclamation, and to have called the regency appointed by the prince to reassume their functions, with the exception of the members (by name,) who had been confidentially employed by the French; and in the same proclamation, I should have desired the remaining *true* members of the Regency to fill up the vacancies by election, according to the powers given to them of electing successors to vacancies by the very act which appoints them.

“ I should then have exerted the influence, which I should have undoubtedly had at this moment over them, to induce them to elect the Bishop of Oporto and others, who it is important should belong to the Government; and thus the Government would have been legally constituted, without the unnecessary interference of a foreign power.

"I have discussed the whole plan more than once with Sir Hew, and I have pointed out the mode of execution, &c.; but instead of adopting it, I now hear that he is going to appoint a Regency, by his own authority; which measure will only add tenfold to the difficulties with which the new Government will have to contend in its outset. I wrote to your brother, however, on this subject, to beg him to make one more effort to keep Sir Hew right; and, if I can, I will see your brother to-morrow."

As matters proceeded, Sir Arthur Wellesley's conviction of the incapacity of Sir Hew Dalrymple appears to have become more confirmed. To Sir John Moore he communicated his opinions most unreservedly,—and the letter has all that manly and straightforward character, for which the extensive correspondence of "the Great Captain" is so remarkable.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"*Lumiar, 17th, Sept. 1808.*

"I write to you on the subject to which this letter relates, with the same freedom with which I hope you would write to me on any point in which you might think the public interests concerned.

"It appears to me to be quite impossible that we can go on as we are now constituted; the Commander-in-chief must be changed, and the country and army naturally turn their eyes to you as their commander. I understand, however, that you have lately had some unpleasant discussions with the king's ministers, having the effect which I have supposed.

"Although I hold a high office under government, I am no party man, but have long been connected in friendship with many of those persons who are now at the head of affairs in England; and I think I have sufficient influence over them that they may listen to me on a point of this description, more particularly as I am convinced that they must be as desirous as I can be to adopt the arrangement

for the command of this army, which all are agreed is the best.

"In these times, my dear general, a man like you should not preclude himself from rendering the services of which he is capable, by any idle point of form. Circumstances may have occurred, and might have justified the discussions to which I have referred; but none can justify the continuance of the temper in which they are carried on; and yet, till there is evidence that it is changed, it appears to me impossible for the king's ministers to employ you in the high situation for which you are the most fit, because during the continuance of this state of mind, there can be no cordial or confidential intercourse.

"In writing thus much, I have perhaps gone too far, and have taken the permission for which it was the intention of this letter to ask; but I shall send it, as it may be convenient for you to be apprised of the view which I have already taken of these discussions, as far as I have any knowledge of them, in deciding whether you will allow me to talk to you any further about them. If you should do so, it would probably be most convenient to us both to meet at Lisbon; or I can go over to you if that should suit you better."

It is evident from the whole tone of Sir Arthur Wellesley's correspondence at this period, that between himself and the Commander-in-chief there was a reserve and want of cordiality, which must have been very embarrassing to both. The letter to Sir Hew Dalrymple, in which he declines to become the official organ between the British government and the local Juntas, betrays those feelings strongly. Sir Arthur says, "My wish is at all times to render myself as useful as may be in my power to the officer under whose command I may be serving; and this desire is limited only by the doubt which I may entertain of my fitness for the employment held out to my acceptance. * * * * In order to be able to perform the

important part allotted to him, this person should ~~possess~~ the confidence of those who employ him; and, ~~above~~ all, in order that he may recommend, with authority, a plan to the Spaniards, he should be acquainted with those of his employers, the means by which they mean to carry them into execution, and those by which they intend to enable the Spanish nation to execute that which will be proposed to them.

* * * * *

“ You must be the best judge whether you have made up your own mind, and are enabled to instruct me, and are inclined to confide in me, to the extent which, in my opinion, will be necessary, in order to derive any general advantage from such a mission. * * * * * This mission, however, would require a full and clear explanation of views and means; and the person who undertakes it must have the confidence of his employer.”

Finding that his relations with the Commander-in-chief were gradually becoming less cordial, and, of course, neither satisfactory to himself, nor of utility to the public, Sir Arthur Wellesley determined on returning to England, and addressed the annexed letter to Sir Hew Dalrymple :—

“ SIR,

“ *Lumiar, 17th Sept. 1808.*

“ The embarkation of the French troops having brought to a final close the operations of the army in Portugal, and as in the present state of the season some time must elapse before the troops can enter upon any other active operation, and as I understand you have sent Lord William Bentinck on the service for which you had thought me qualified, and it is not probable that there will be an opportunity for active service, or that you will require my assistance at this particular moment, or for some time to come, I am induced to request your permission to go to England.

“ The situation of my office of Chief Secretary in

Ireland, of which the duties have been done lately by a gentleman who is now dead, renders it desirable, under these circumstances, that I should be in England as soon as possible, to ascertain whether it is his Majesty's pleasure that I should continue to hold it, or that I should relinquish it. I have therefore to request that you will give me leave to go to England by the first ship that shall sail.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

And yet the application appears to have been reluctantly made; Sir Arthur Wellesley felt all that conscious superiority which a master mind exercises over those of inferior character—and had Sir Hew Dalrymple possessed sufficient tact to have availed himself of those talents, which in so brief a period were afterwards so fully developed, how differently might that campaign have closed—and, a name remembered only as being affixed to the Convention, might have been emblazoned in British history as the conqueror of Junot!

In writing to the Adjutant-General, the sentiments which elicited the preceding inferences are thus expressed:—

"I am going to-morrow; and I regret that it was so late when I reached head-quarters yesterday that I could not endeavour to find you before I came away.

"I do not conceal from you that I am not quite satisfied with our situation; but nothing should have induced me to go away if I had thought there was the smallest prospect of early active employment for the army; and I should not go now if my poor friend, Mr. Trail, were not dead, and if it were not necessary that I should be in England, if possible, to know whether I am to retain my office or to resign it, and if there were a probability of another early opportunity of going home.

* * * * *

“In regard to matters personal to myself, I shall not enter into them. I wish Sir Hew had given me credit for a sincere desire to forward his views, whatever they might be; and I think I could have been of as much use to him as I believe I have been to other officers under whose orders I have served. He is the only one of whom I have not been the right hand for some years past; and at the same time I must say that I felt the same inclination to serve him that I had to serve others.”



CHAPTER XXIV.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY RETURNS TO ENGLAND—SIR HEW DALRYMPLE RECALLED—FEELINGS IN ENGLAND REGARDING THE CONVENTION—BOARD OF INQUIRY—LETTER TO LORD CASTLEREAGH—STATEMENTS OF SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY—SIR HARRY BURRARD—DECISION OF THE BOARD OF INQUIRY—THE KING'S OPINION—SIR ARTHUR RESUMES HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES—RECEIVES THE THANKS OF BOTH HOUSES—SPEAKER'S ADDRESS—SIR ARTHUR'S REPLY.

WHILE Sir Arthur Wellesley returned on leave of absence, Sir Hew Dalrymple was recalled under circumstances which sufficiently implied "that the country was not satisfied with the result of the two late victories." Sir Harry Burrard, who succeeded him, under the plea of bad health, resigned after a few days, "and the command then devolved upon one, whom, next to Sir Arthur Wellesley, the troops most respected and loved—Lieutenant-General Sir John Moore."

Never did a commanding officer return to explain his conduct to a country less disposed to listen calmly to his justification, than Sir Hew Dalrymple. Popular dissatisfaction had broke forth, "with such a torrent of rabid malevolence, that all feelings of right and justice were overborne, and the voice of truth stifled by their obstreperous cry."* Throughout the kingdom, meetings were publicly convened, to express the general indignation of the people at the treaty that had been concluded; and to demand from the government, that all concerned in the Convention should be visited with the signal displeasure of both the country and the king.

* Napier.

Never had national exultation been so suddenly and unexpectedly suppressed. "The official accounts of the battle reached England a fortnight before the news of the armistice and Convention; tidings came with it that the French had proposed to evacuate Portugal; and the news of Junot's unconditional surrender was looked for as what must necessarily ensue. When the terms of the Convention were received, the Park and Tower guns were fired; but the public feeling was not in accordance with this demonstration of joy, and never was any public feeling so unanimously and instantaneously manifested. The hopes of the nation had been raised to the highest pitch, and their disappointment was in proportion."

* * * *

"The newspapers joined in one cry of wonder and abhorrence. * * * Some refused to disgrace their pages by inserting the treaty; others surrounded it with broad black lines, putting their journal in mourning for the dismal intelligence it contained; some headed the page with a representation of three gibbets, and a general suspended from each."*

The annals of British history record no public transaction producing a burst of national indignation, like that caused by the Convention, when its provisions were generally known. The more temperate journalists of the day called on the government to annul a treaty that could not be kept, except by a violation of faith with every ally of Great Britain. To the Portuguese, they argued, it was most unwarrantable to secure the removal of an army from a country they had devastated, when no means of retreat was left them, except what the flag of England afforded. To Spain, they said, it was equally unjust. Twenty-five thousand Frenchmen, cut off from every hope of succour, and reduced to the very brink of an unconditional surrender, were to be safely transported to their own shores with their arms and equipments, to be immediately

* Southey.

disposable, should Napoleon order them to recross the Pyrenees, and unite with other corps employed in the subjugation of the Peninsula. In perfect amity with Sweden, could that policy be defended which would safely convey the sailors of the Russian fleet through the Baltic, to re-man vessels most probably to be employed against the Swedes? It was roundly asserted, that, even by the strict letter of the law of nations, the Convention, on the part of England, should be rejected. "It was less disgraceful to break these terms than fulfil them; better that the French should reproach us, than they should compliment us upon a fidelity which enabled them to injure our allies. The blow, it was affirmed, might have gone far towards deciding the fate of Europe. France had lost one army in Andalusia; and how deeply Buonaparte felt the loss, was shown by the anxiety with which he concealed it from the French people. What might not have been the effect of the destruction of a second and a larger army, following so close upon the former! How would it have encouraged the Portuguese, given new animation to the Spaniards, and raised the hopes and courage of those various states who were suffering under the tyrant's yoke!"*

The conditions granted to the Russian Admiral were as heavily censured as those which had been conceded to Junot. In vain, the former amicable relations which existed between the courts of St. Petersburg and St. James, were pleaded in apology for terms being agreed to, that otherwise might have been considered inadmissible. In vain, the protection afforded by Admiral Siniavia and his officers to English and Portuguese refugees, was urged as a reason for not acting harshly by an ancient ally. One infelicitous expression in the wording of the treaty, was seized upon by the press; and the "holding in deposit" was, as a phrase, declared to be totally un-English. The British navy had never heard it before. They knew what it was to fight their enemies, and to beat them; but "to hold in deposit"

* Southey.

was a term never found in nautical parlance before ; and furious tirades against the article of the Convention which contained it, generally wound up with an interrogatory, of "How would Nelson have received such a proposal?"

Such was the state of popular feeling when Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in England. His name was entangled with generals who had not won the fields of Rolicca and Vimiero, but who had completed a treaty which it was asserted, had disgraced the honour and ruined the interests of Britain. Although primarily opposed to a moment's delay in operations, and determined upon pressing the French army to the uttermost on the day of the 21st, as well as being subsequently opposed to many articles of the Convention, Sir Arthur could not escape being mixed in the unpopularity of the whole proceedings ; and it required that a means for justification should be afforded him, before public opinion was disabused—and that that share alone in the transaction, which he individually bore, should be publicly ascertained, and properly appreciated.

In accordance with the demands of the country, the King directed that a full investigation should take place into all matters connected with a transaction, which had disappointed the hopes and expectations of the nation. A Board of Inquiry, consisting of seven general officers, was accordingly directed to assemble. They met at the Royal College at Chelsea ; and their sittings continued from the 14th of November until the 27th of December, 1808.

Immediately on his return to England, Sir Arthur Wellesley addressed a letter to Lord Castlereagh, in consequence of a communication previously received by the Secretary of State from Sir Hew Dalrymple. A passage in that letter had stated that Sir Arthur agreed upon and signed certain articles "for the suspension of hostilities on the 22d of August." Alluding to this assertion, Sir Arthur says, "I beg leave to inform your Lordship that I did not negotiate that agreement ; that it was negotiated and settled by his Excellency in person, with General Keller-

man, in the presence of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burrard and myself; and that I signed it by his Excellency's desire. But I could not consider myself responsible in any degree for the terms in which it was framed, or for any of its provisions.

"At the same time, advertng to the situation which I had held in Portugal previously to his Excellency's arrival, I think it but just to inform your Lordship, that I concurred with the commander of the forces in thinking it expedient, on the 22d of August, that the French army in Portugal should be allowed to evacuate that kindgom, with their arms and baggage, and that every facility for this purpose should be afforded them."*

To disprove a charge of rashness, both as regarded his advance, and intended operations had he not been superseded on the 21st of August,—and also to show what part he had taken in effecting the treaty, and how far he had generally concurred in the views of the Commander-in-chief, Sir Arthur subsequently entered into a full and lucid explanation. Nothing could be more candid than his statement; and the country was readily enabled to come to a true conclusion as to the persons with whom the mischief had originated. Afterstating that his own effective strength was 13,000 British troops, with 6000 Portuguese, by whom he naturally calculated that he should be supported, he proceeds:—

"But I will ask this Court what would have been said, and deservedly said, and felt of me, throughout the army and the country, and by the government by which I was entrusted, if, with such a force, I had hesitated to advance upon the enemy?

* * * * *

"The next question is, whether, having adequate means in my power, I adopted proper measures to effect my object. Sir Hew Dalrymple says, that, by the line of

* Wellington Despatches.

march I adopted, all the strong positions were in the hands of the enemy ; but I can assure him, that he will find it very difficult to adopt any line of march in Portugal, which will not afford strong positions to an enemy acting on the defensive. But there was one advantage attending the line which I adopted, which was, that it rendered the enemy's superior cavalry useless, in the way in which he ought and would have employed it if I had adopted any other line.

" If I had adopted the line by the high road from Lisbon to the north by Santarem, I must have kept up my communication with the Mondego ; which would have weakened my force for operations in the field, and after all, the enemy with his cavalry must have broken in upon it. By adopting the line by the sea-coast, and depending for my supplies upon the shipping, my communication was so short that it defended itself ; I was enabled to keep my force collected in one body, and I had my arsenals and magazines close to me whenever I required to communicate with them."

* * * * *

" The next point to which I shall draw the attention of the Court, is the share which I am supposed to have had in the negotiation of the Armistice, and the Convention.

* * * * *

It is important, therefore, to show what advice I really did give,—in what view I gave it,—and what would have been the result if the measures which I recommended had been pursued.

* * * * *

" When the measure of allowing the French to evacuate Portugal was to be taken into consideration, it was necessary to review the situation, the means, and the resources of the two armies, and our own objects."

Sir Arthur proceeds to enumerate the facilities which Junot possessed of retreating from Cabeza across the Tagus and into the Alentejo, where he would have found ample supplies. He could have marched, unmolested, by

the best road in Portugal to Elvas, and, after placing a garrison there, with the remainder of his army crossed the upper Tagus, and occupied Almeida.

Such being the means within Junot's power of effecting a secure retreat, the actual and future positions of the British corps were next to be considered. On the evening before the battle of Vimiero, Sir John Moore had been ordered to advance and assist in operations consequent on the French sustaining a defeat. Sir John's corps was to support itself at Santarem, and that could only be effected by keeping his communications open with the Mondego. Sir John, therefore, could only act in the immediate support of the army under Sir Arthur Wellesley; "depending for his subsistence upon the means which had been provided, and the whole bearing upon the enemy's front."

"Our operations," continued Sir Arthur, "when we should have joined, would have been those of a superior army pressing upon an inferior on its retreat: but nothing which we could have done would have cut off this retreat. The enemy must have been in Lisbon before us; the Tagus would have been the enemy's to the last moment of their passage; and after they should have crossed, the necessity of possessing ourselves of the forts on the river, and the Russian fleet in the first instance, and the want of boats, which the enemy would have carried off, would have given them ample time to make all their arrangements in Alentejo before our troops could reach them.

"But, in carrying on these operations, we should have been involved in many difficulties and distresses, which might have again placed in a state of risk all the objects of the campaign.

"The communication with the shipping on the coast of Portugal is at all times precarious, and becomes more so towards the end of August, and is at length quite impracticable; in fact, many boats were swamped in the last week in August, vessels lost their anchors, and more than once the fleet was obliged to go to sea in danger. On the

22d of August, there were eleven days' bread in camp for the original force which marched from Lavaos on the 9th and 10th of August; the troops which had landed on the 20th had brought four days' bread for themselves, and the supply for the whole might have been for eight or nine days; and no means could be procured of moving a larger quantity: no bread whatever could be procured in the country; and, in point of fact, I believe that, except a few thousand rations of bread left behind by the French, at Alcobaca, Caldas, and Torres Vedras, and which were given to the Portuguese troops, the country supplied not a single ration from the time the troops landed till I came away on the 20th September.

"It was obvious, then, that when Sir John Moore's corps should land at Maceira, and should nearly double the consumption of the army, without increasing the means of procuring and conveying its supply, there was a risk of its being in want.

"Sir John Moore's corps could not be expected to be on shore and in a situation to commence its operations, till the end of August, during which period the enemy would have fortified his position at Cabeza de Montachique, and in the rear towards Lisbon; and it would have been unreasonable to expect to be able to force or turn them in less than ten days. During the whole of this period, as well as during the time that would be employed in landing Sir John Moore's corps, the whole army would have subsisted, and would have depended, upon the means which had been collected and provided for the subsistence of half of it; and it would have been certain of a supply only at the time it should reach, and be in possession of, the river Tagus, so as to admit the transports.

"After we should have obliged the enemy to cross the Tagus, and we should have possessed ourselves of the forts on that river, and of the Russian fleet, and we should have crossed the river with the British army, we must have placed ourselves in a situation to invest Elvas for a blockade

or a regular siege. In either case the army would have been exposed to the effects of a bad climate in the worst season of the year; and in the latter case, they would have had to move the means for the siege from Abrantes, beyond which place the Tagus would not have carried them to the scene of action, a distance of no less than 60 miles.

“After having performed this operation, the army would have been obliged to renew it, in order to obtain possession of Almeida.

“I am convinced that we should not have had possession of Elvas till late in December; and I think it more than probable that we should have been glad to allow the French to evacuate Portugal in that month instead of August, if we had persevered, after having sustained the loss of a great part of our army by sickness, and of three months of most valuable time with reference to further operations.

“I conceive that the objects of His Majesty, and of the Spanish nation, were, that the British armies should co-operate with the Spanish armies.

“I believe that the only mode in which the operations of the Spanish corps could be brought to bear upon the same object, was by the influence which the co-operation of a British army would give to the government; and I believe that it was important to the Spanish nation to have the co-operation of 30,000 British soldiers in Spain, to receive the assistance of 4000 Spanish soldiers, who were prisoners to the French, and of about 2000 who were employed in Portugal.

“I considered these objects to be so important as to counterbalance the disadvantage of throwing 20,000 additional French troops, at a very remote period, upon the Pyrenees; that the Spanish nation would gain, even upon a comparison of numbers, not less than 16,000 good troops; but if I were not mistaken in my political speculations upon this subject, they would likewise acquire strength in their own union, the amount of which could not be estimated; which strength, I well knew, they could

acquire from no other source excepting Portugal, if a British army was to give it to them, as I knew that this country could not afford to send out another army of sufficient strength."

In the course of the proceedings Sir Harry Burrard addressed the Court, and, in the course of his defence, he made the following statement:—

"At the time Sir Arthur Wellesley came up to me, and publicly proposed to me to advance, I felt the situation it placed me in, and that it was not likely my determination should please a British army, who had so much signalized itself: that will, I believe, be sufficient proof that I acted to the best of my judgment, and those who know me will be convinced, very much against my feelings.

"My sentiments on the uncommon situation in which I then stood, were well known to those of my staff about me. The want, at this moment, of every one of those gentlemen who were with me on the 21st of August, I sincerely feel and regret; and am convinced the Board will also feel for the person who stands in so unusual a predicament; at the same time, if there has been any error in judgment, it is all my own; I decided for myself, from what I saw and heard, and take, most decidedly, the whole responsibility upon myself."

These observations induced Sir Arthur to address the Board again; and the manly testimony which he gave in favour of Sir Harry Burrard's conduct on the 21st of August, was said, at the time, to have had a strong effect in changing public opinion.

"I trust that the Court will permit me to address a few words to them upon this occasion.

"Although I did differ, and do still differ, in opinion with Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burrard, respecting the measures adopted immediately after the battle of the 21st of August, I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous in me, as an inferior officer, to declare to the Court and to the public, the opinion which I have always entertained,

that Sir Harry Burrard decided, upon that occasion, upon fair military grounds, in the manner which appeared to him to be most conducive to the interests of the country; and that he had no motive for his decision which could be supposed personal to me, or which, as an officer, he could not avow."

The tedious proceedings of the Court of Inquiry had kept the public mind in an unsettled state; and pending the report of the Board of General Officers, the late commanders in Portugal for more than a month were exposed to unmeasured invective, while the worst constructions were put upon any portion of their conduct which admitted of a doubt.* At last, the Board delivered their opinions. The report was neither luminous nor satisfactory; and the officers, who had all throughout acted with delicacy and impartiality, acknowledged the difficulty of coming to a more decisive conclusion:—

"It appears a point on which no evidence adduced can enable the Board to pronounce with confidence, whether or not a pursuit after the battle of the 21st could have been efficacious; nor can the Board feel competent to determine on the expedience of a forward movement to Torres Vedras, when Sir Harry Burrard has stated weighty considerations against such a measure. Further, it is to be observed, that so many collateral circumstances could not be known in the moment of the enemy's repulse, as afterwards became clear to the army, and have been represented to the Board. And considering the extraordinary circumstances, under which two new commanding generals arrived from the ocean, and joined the army (the one during, and the other immediately after a battle, and those successively superseding each other, and both the original commanders,

* It appears that none of the commanding officers were fortunate enough to give satisfaction to those who had employed them, as Napoleon is said to have observed, "I was going to send Junot before a council of war, but, fortunately, the English tried their generals, and saved me the pain of punishing an old friend."

within the space of twenty-four hours,) it is not surprising that the army was not carried forward until the second day after the action, from the necessity of the generals being acquainted with the actual state of things, and of their army, and proceeding accordingly.*

“It appears that the Convention of Cintra, in its progress and conclusion, or at least all the principal articles of it, were not objected to by the five distinguished Lieut.-Generals of that army; and other general officers who were in that service, whom we have had an opportunity to examine, have also concurred in the great advantages that were immediately gained to the country of Portugal, to the army and navy, and to the general service, by the conclusion of the Convention at that time.”

Whatever difficulty the Board might find, in adjudicating on the policy or demerits of the treaty, the King, while he assented to the opinion expressed by the Court, that further proceedings were not required, expressed “his own unequivocal disapprobation of the provisions of the Convention,”—and this was duly conveyed, through Lord Castlereagh to His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief:—

“*Downing Street, January 18, 1809.*”

“The King has taken into his consideration the report of the Board of Inquiry, together with the documents and opinions thereunto annexed.

“While His Majesty adopts the unanimous opinion of the Board, that no further military proceeding is necessary to be had upon the transactions referred to their

* “Thus ended the last act of the celebrated Convention of Cintra, the very name of which will always be a signal record of the ignorant and ridiculous vehemence of the public feeling;—for the armistice, the negotiations, the Convention itself, and the execution of its provisions, were all commenced conducted, and concluded, at the distance of thirty miles from Cintra, with which place they had not the slightest connexion, political, military or local.”—*Napier*.

investigation, His Majesty does not intend, thereby, to convey any expression of His Majesty's satisfaction, at the terms and conditions of the Armistice or Convention.

* * * * *

"At the close of the inquiry, the King (abstaining from any observations upon other parts of the Convention,) repeats his disapprobation of those articles; His Majesty deeming it necessary that his sentiments should be clearly understood, as to the impropriety and danger of the unauthorized admission into military conventions of articles of such a description, which, especially when incautiously framed, may lead to the most injurious consequences.

"His Majesty cannot forbear further to observe, that Lieut.-General Sir Hew Dalrymple's delaying to transmit for his information the Armistice concluded on the 22d of August, until the 4th of September, when he at the same time transmitted the ratified Convention, was calculated to produce great public inconvenience; and that such public inconvenience did, in fact, result therefrom.

"CASTLEREAGH."

After the termination of the inquiry, Sir Arthur Wellesley returned to his duties as Chief Secretary for Ireland, he having resumed that office immediately on his landing from Portugal. In January 1809, he took his seat in Parliament—and in his place there, had the gratification to receive the thanks of the Commons of Great Britain, for his gallantry and skill at the battle of Vimiero.

On this interesting occasion, the Speaker thus addressed him:—

"LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY,—

"After the events of last year, it was impossible that Parliament should reassemble, without directing its earliest attention to the services of the British army in Portugal; and, amidst the contending opinions which have prevailed

upon other questions, the public voice has been loud and general in admiration of your splendid achievements.

"It is your praise to have inspired your troops with unshaken confidence and unbounded ardour; to have commanded, not the obedience alone, but the hearts and affections of your companions in arms; and, having planned your operations with the skill and promptitude which have so eminently characterized all your former exertions, you have again led the armies of your country to battle, with the same deliberate valour and triumphant success, which have long since rendered your name illustrious in the remotest parts of this empire.

"Military glory has ever been dear to this nation; and great military exploits, in the field and upon the ocean, have their sure reward in royal favour, and the gratitude of Parliament. It is, therefore, with the highest satisfaction, that, in this fresh instance, I now proceed to deliver to you the thanks of this House; and I do now, accordingly, by the command and in the name of the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, thank you for the distinguished valour, ability, and conduct displayed by you on the 17th and 21st of August last, in Portugal; on the latter of which days you obtained, at Vimiero, over the army of the enemy, a signal victory, honourable and glorious to the British arms."

Sir Arthur Wellesley rose and made the following answer:—

"MR. SPEAKER,

"I beg leave to express my acknowledgments to the House for the high honour which they have conferred upon me by the notice which they have taken, and the approbation they have conveyed, of my conduct during the time I commanded His Majesty's troops in Portugal.

"No man can value more highly than I do, the honourable distinction which has been conferred upon me; a distinction which it is in the power of the representatives

of a free people alone to bestow, and which it is the peculiar advantage of the officers and soldiers in the service of His Majesty to have held out to them as the object of their ambition, and to receive as the reward of their services.

“I beg leave to return to you, Sir, my thanks for the handsome terms in which your kindness, I ought to say your partiality for me, has induced you to convey the approbation of the House.”

A similar mark of their approbation was conveyed to Sir Arthur Wellesley, the generals who served under him, and the whole of the officers and men, by a resolution of the House of Lords, conveyed through the Lord Chancellor. A suitable reply from Sir Arthur was returned for this mark of high distinction conferred upon the army, by the Upper House; and with these occurrences, the history of the first Peninsular campaign may have been said to terminate.





Handwritten signature: A. H.

CHAPTER XXV.

DISTRIBUTION OF JOSEPH'S ARMY—STATE OF SPAIN—FOLLY AND PRESUMPTION OF THE JUNTA—THEIR ARMIES NEGLECTED—DELIVERANCE OF ROMANA—POSITION OF THE SPANISH ARMIES—FRENCH REINFORCED—JUNTA DECIDE ON ACTIVE OPERATIONS—POSITION OF THE FRENCH ARMY—OPERATIONS OF BLAKE—FALSEHOODS PROMULGATED AT PARIS—NAPOLEON'S DECISION—HIS PREPARATIONS—HE REVIEWS AND HARANGUES THE TROOPS—SETS OUT FOR BAYLEN—DISSATISFIED WITH JOSEPH—BLAKE ADVANCES—LEFEBRE ATTACKS AND DEFEATS HIM—MOVEMENT OF ACEVEDO—FRENCH OBLIGED TO RETIRE—ORGANIZATION OF THE FRENCH ARMY—ITS DIFFERENT CORPS AND COMMANDERS—NAPOLEON'S DISPOSITIONS—BLAKE ATTACKS THE FRENCH—IS DEFEATED—AND RETREATS TO LOS MONTEROS—NAPOLEON ARRIVES AT VITTORIA—ARRANGES THE PLAN OF HIS CAMPAIGN, AND PUTS THE ARMY INTO MOTION.

WE have already mentioned that on receiving intelligence of Dupont's unexpected defeat at Baylen, Joseph Buonaparte had fallen back from Madrid to Vittoria. There the centre of the French army was established, its right wing appuyed on San Sebastian, while the left was thrown back upon Pampeluna. Garrisons were left in all the strong places throughout the adjacent provinces, sufficiently strong in numbers to overawe the people, and secure the occupancy of the country, until powerful reinforcements should pass the Pyrenees, bear down national opposition, and, to use Napoleon's favourite phrase, "drive the leopards to the sea."

While thus for a season the French attitude was perfectly a defensive one, from the extreme violence of the popular indignation of the Spaniards at its first outbreak, important consequences were expected to have resulted. The influence of Napoleon had undoubtedly received a sudden and a dangerous check; but the curse of that unhappy people, imbecility and presumption, prevented

them from reaping the advantages which accident had gained. The momentary successes attendant on their arms, produced little beside arrogance, jealousy, and corruption. The generals were disunited—all struggled for a leadership, for which all were totally unfitted; while, if possible, the local authorities in their proceedings, were still more divided, and still more absurd. "There were now," says Southey, "as many governments as there were juntas, each acting with little regard to the others; and as these were everywhere filled by persons chosen because of their station, the government throughout Spain was delivered, or rather fell, into the hands of the provincial nobility and gentry, with a few clergy; a set of men, whom their general want of information, their prejudices, and their previous way of life, in great measure disqualified for the task to which they were called."

The fallacy that marked the official returns respecting the resources of the country was incredible. Romana and Blake were stated to have in Galicia and the Asturias nearly sixty thousand disposable troops; while it was asserted that Castanos was actually threatening the front and flank of Joseph Buonaparte, with a force equally imposing in numbers and efficiency. In their proceedings, the junta carried matters to a climax of absurdity scarcely to be credited, many of their arrangements being made consequent on the expulsion of the French from Spain, and only to take effect from that period, when the last of the invaders should have been driven across the Pyrenees. Indeed, it was gravely intimated to the British army in Portugal, that unless favoured by adventitious circumstances, they were doomed only to witness the deliverance of the Peninsula, and remain non-combatant in inglorious inactivity, while the energies of the nation effected its own deliverance.

Nothing parallels Spanish presumption and pretence, and nothing could exceed the miserable delusion to which the authorities gave way. The Spanish armies were in

every respect unserviceable; and notwithstanding the immense supplies already received from England,* they wanted clothing and equipments—had no commissariat whatever—and even in numerical strength were grossly overrated. Corps, put down by the juntas at twenty or thirty thousand men, proved, when inspected by British officers, to muster scarcely eight or ten thousand men—and of these, at least one half were unprovided with muskets or ammunition. But while indifferent to the adoption of means within their power for defence—while the armies were “neglected even to nakedness, and the soldier’s constancy under privations was cruelly abused,” the cupidity and arrogance displayed in securing to their own body both wealth and honours were disgusting. The Supreme Junta decreed that their persons should be held inviolable—that to their president the title of Highness should be granted, with a fixed annual salary of 25,000 crowns—that the title of Excellency, and 5000 crowns yearly, should be given to each of the deputies, and the term Majesty used in addressing their body collectively. “In the midst of all this pomp and vanity, the presence of the enemy on the soil was scarcely remembered, and the details of business were totally neglected—a prominent evil that extended to the lowest branches of administration. Self-interest, indeed, produced abundance of activity, but every department, almost every man, seemed struck with torpor when the public welfare was at stake; and, withal, an astonishing presumption was common to the highest and the lowest.”†

* “Within twelve months from the commencement of the war she sent over to the Spanish armies (besides 2,000,000*l.*) 150 pieces of field artillery, 42,000 rounds of ammunition, 200,000 muskets, 61,000 swords, 79,000 pikes, 23,000,000 ball cartridges, 6 000,000 leaden balls, 15,000 barrels of gunpowder, 92,000 suits of clothing, 356,000 sets of accoutrements and pouches, 310,000 pairs of shoes, 37,000 pairs of boots, 40,000 tents, 250,000 yards of cloth, 10,000 sets of camp equipage, 118,000 yards of linen, 50,000 great coats, 50,000 canteens, 54,000 havresacks, with a variety of other stores, far too numerous to be recapitulated.”—*Jones’s Account of the War.*

† Southey.

While the Spanish government evinced this disgraceful apathy regarding its military preparations, British enterprise was engaged in planning and effecting one of the most vigorous and successful operations which distinguished those eventful times. It will be remembered that one of the ablest of Napoleon's measures, preparatory to his occupation of Spain, was the happy facility with which he contrived to remove from that country the *élite* of her army, and detain it in the north of Europe. In August 1807, the Spanish corps, consisting of about 14,000 men, under the command of the Marquess Romana, were quartered on the Elbe and at Lubec; but when a breach with Sweden was expected, during the following March, the troops received orders to move towards the Baltic, and they were accordingly detached to different stations, and quartered in the islands of Zealand and Jutland.

Already suspected of disaffection towards Napoleon, it was a service of considerable danger, and required both caution and ability, to open a communication with Romana, apprise him of the true state of Spain, and prepare him for the intended enterprise. Through the agency of a Scottish priest, named Robertson, the first difficulty was surmounted; and, afterwards, by the accidental capture of a Spanish officer, the British admiral was enabled to convey the necessary instructions to the Marquess, on which that gallant soldier acted with his usual promptitude. The result was, that the greater portion of the Spanish troops were safely removed by the fleet under Sir Richard Keats;* and, after a short delay at Gottenburg, they

* The following curious anecdote is related by Dr. Southey, on the authority of Sir Richard Keats. As the horses could not be removed, from the inclemency of the weather, and without additional means of transport, they were of necessity abandoned, and turned loose upon the beach. "A scene ensued such as probably before was never witnessed. The Spanish horses are not mutilated, and these were sensible that they were no longer under any restraint of human power. A general conflict ensued, in which, retaining the discipline they had learnt, they charged each other in squadrons of ten and twenty together; then closely engaged, striking with their fore-feet, and biting

proceeded to their destination, and were safely landed at Santander.

The Spanish armies at this time nominally amounted to 130,000 men, and nearly doubled in numbers the French corps that were opposed to them. Blake, with the army of the west, occupied a line extending from Burgos to Bilbao. The army of Aragon and Valencia, under the command of Palafox, partly in position near Zaragoza, and with its right on Sanguessa, outflanked the French left considerably, while the centre, under Castanos, occupied Soria. The whole nearly formed a crescent of great extent, and consequently nothing could be more faulty than the general dispositions of the Spanish commanders; "they were acting without concert—their wings were widely separated; and either flank was exposed to the attack of superior numbers, from an enemy quick in movement, much stronger in cavalry, and having the chord of the half-circle for their line of operation."*

The French armies, in the mean time, were hourly gaining accessions to their strength; and it was known by an intercepted despatch, that an immense reinforcement was actually on its march for Spain. The first successes of the Spaniards, grossly exaggerated as they were, had created a delusion not to be repressed; and the imaginary power of the nation, as cried up by the Junta, was religiously believed in by the people. All prudential measures were unpopular; and the generals in command were desired to hasten operations, and, as a thing of

and tearing each other with the most ferocious rage, and trampling over those which were beaten down, till the shore, in the course of a quarter of an hour, was strewn with the dead and disabled. A few which had been disembarked at a distance from the scene, on hearing the uproar, came thundering down over the intermediate hedges, and catching the contagious madness, plunged into the fight with equal fury. It was deemed unsafe to venture to destroy them, as in this case would have been a mercy; and when the last boats quitted the beach, the few horses that remained were seen still engaged in the dreadful work of mutual destruction."

* Sherer.

course, achieve the deliverance of Spain. Palafox and Castanos personally disliked each other, and consequently they totally disagreed in opinion. The former, a man of no military experience, was anxious to plunge at once into hostilities; while the latter, with better judgment, hesitated to encounter an army, which he knew were in the highest state of discipline, and infinitely superior in two important arms—cavalry and artillery. Commissioners were therefore despatched from the central Junta to report on which of these opposite opinions the government should act; and they decided that active operations should be commenced. That advice was followed, and it ended in ruin and defeat.*

The French army, with its late reinforcements, its garrisons, and the movable columns which kept the communications open between Biscay, Alava, and Guipuscoa, or watched the passes of the Pyrenees, now exceeded 90,000 men, without including the troops in Catalonia. They occupied a line but half the distance of that taken by the Spanish armies, and which extended from Zaragoza to Reynosa. The base of the French operations rested on the three fortresses of Bayonne, Pampeluna, and San Sebastian. Their reserve was in immediate communication with the more advanced corps; and it, or the centre, could be carried in three days to either of the flanks which it might be deemed advisable to strengthen; while the Spaniards, from the distance between their wings, and the disadvantage attendant on a double line of operations they had unwisely adopted, could never have united on any point above forty thousand men.

On the 17th of September, having formed his army into six divisions, two of which composed his advanced guard and reserve, Blake broke up from Reynosa, for the avowed purpose of favouring an insurrectionary movement in the

* "General Blake appeared to have no feeling of his own deficiencies. He went headlong to the line of operations; and the result was, as might have been expected, most disastrous."—*Leith Hay*.

provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa. He succeeded in penetrating to Bilboa,* but alarmed at the demonstrations of the enemy, he promptly abandoned that city. A second time he moved forward, and occupied Bilboa again on the 12th of October, and continuing his operations he forced the enemy before him through the valley of Durango, until by a fortunate junction with a corps under Verdier, the French were enabled to halt at Zornosa, and check the further advance of the patriot army. No decisive fighting took place. The Spanish corps, which had escaped from the Baltic, landed at Santander,† and immediately marched to the support of Blake's division, which had halted at the head of the valley of Villarcayo, and taken a position between Frias and Valmaceda.

The intelligence of the Spanish insurrection reached the French capital, but measures had been effectually taken by the police to suppress the humiliating truths, that an army and a fleet had already surrendered to the peasant levies of the disaffected. The outbreak was described as merely a popular disturbance, got up for the purposes of pillage—some bands of smugglers, it was asserted, had broken the prisons, and armed the felons they had confined. But the authorities had suppressed these disorders—the guilty had been punished—and throughout Spain the best spirit towards France prevailed, and the whole kingdom was tranquil and contented.

But while he cautiously prevented his disasters from

* "Bilboa is a very fine town, built with great regularity, the streets spacious, well paved, and the buildings large and handsome. The environs are highly cultivated and picturesque. The town lies low, but it is surrounded by great variety of ground, the neighbouring hills being wooded to their summits. It has every advantage, from its beautiful, and, commercially speaking, convenient locality. The river is navigable up to the town, which has long been the most considerable mercantile place upon the north coast of the Peninsula."—*Leith Hay*.

† Santander is a place of considerable commercial and military importance. Its harbour is capacious and well sheltered; and, by Reynosa, it has a good land communication with Burgos and Madrid.

being known, to the real state of Spanish feeling Napoleon was no stranger. He saw the dangerous position in which his usurpation of the throne of the Bourbons had placed him. A reaction had been awakened in the Peninsula, pregnant alike with danger to his person and his power. No prophecy* was required to point out to him the threatening appearances of coming events; and his resolution was promptly taken, to crush in its budding that spirit of independence, which, if suffered to mature, would prove fatal to his throne and dynasty. The fatal step was taken—it could not be recalled. From the sword security could only be obtained; and no matter what blood it cost, the dawning of liberty in Spain must be promptly and utterly extinguished. With such convictions, Napoleon instantly prepared for one of those gigantic efforts which have stamped this age with the greatness of antiquity.†

To the senate he communicated his intentions: “I am determined,” he said, “to carry on the war in Spain with the utmost activity, and to destroy the armies which England has disembarked in that country. The future security of my subjects, a maritime peace, and the security of commerce, equally depend upon these important operations.”

The appeal was received, as all his other ordinances were by a body so totally subservient to his will. Again the conscription was resorted to; one year’s had been anticipated already, but a further demand was made for 80,000 men, although their services, by the laws of France, were not rated as available until 1810. From the military masses dispersed over every part of Europe, the choicest soldiers were selected. The imperial guard, “the veterans of Jena, of Austerlitz, of Friedland, reduced in number, but of confirmed hardihood, were collected into one corps, and marched towards Spain. A host of cavalry, unequalled

* “An old prophecy was at this time circulated in Paris, importing that the disasters which would lead to the overthrow of the French empire were to originate in Spain.”—*Southey*.

† Napier.

for enterprise and knowledge of war, were also directed against that devoted land; and a long train of gallant soldiers followed, until 200,000 men, accustomed to battle, had penetrated the gloomy fastnesses of the Western Pyrenees."*

Napoleon reviewed those splendid corps, as they passed through the capital on their route to Spain. None knew the character of the nation over whom he ruled so well; none, therefore, could address himself more powerfully to their passions. Proud, and with justice, of the glory they had acquired, language that to others would appear inflated, was heard by the French soldier as only a just tribute to his daring and deserts. On this occasion the Emperor harangued the troops; and the address, so characteristic of the man, betrays the deep annoyance which "the presence of the leopard" on the Peninsula, had occasioned to the subjugator of Europe.

"Soldiers! After having triumphed on the banks of the Danube and the Vistula, you have passed through Germany by forced marches. I shall now order you to march through France, without allowing you a moment's rest. Soldiers! I have occasion for you! The hideous presence of the leopard contaminates the continent of Spain and Portugal. Let your aspect terrify and drive him from thence! Let us carry our conquering eagles even to the Pillars of Hercules; and there also we have an injury to avenge. Soldiers! You have exceeded the fame of all modern warriors. You have placed yourselves upon a level with the Roman legions, who, in one campaign, were conquerors on the Rhine, on the Euphrates, in Illyria, and on the Tagus. A durable peace, and permanent prosperity, shall be the fruits of your exertions. A true Frenchman never can enjoy rest till the sea is open and free. Soldiers! All that you have already achieved, and that which remains to be done, will be for the happiness of

* Napier.

the French people and for my glory, and shall be for ever imprinted on my heart."

After putting into motion the different corps destined for service on the Peninsula, Napoleon made a rapid journey into Germany, to meet the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth. The deliberations between the rulers of France and Russia terminated in a proposal for a general peace, conveyed by both in a joint letter, addressed to the King of England. These overtures, after a lengthened correspondence, were firmly rejected; and, with additional reason for detesting a nation who were neither to be intimidated nor deluded, Napoleon crossed the Pyrenees to annihilate the island warriors, who, according to his parlance, "contaminated the Peninsula" by their presence.

His brother had felt deeply mortified, when he found that Joseph had retired from Madrid; and his subsequent conduct, when established at Vittoria, was not calculated to propitiate the Emperor. Although, in his constant communications, the latter had given ample instructions for the employment of the French corps, his orders were but imperfectly carried into execution, and every despatch from the King of Spain was filled with complaints of want of means, and excuses for the misapplication of those he actually possessed.* Napoleon was particularly desirous that the Spanish generals should be left undisturbed, calculating, with great justice, that the national apathy, when not kept in constant alarm, would engender a false and

* It would appear that letters had been sent from the French head-quarters at Vittoria to the Emperor, complaining of the difficulty which Joseph and his generals experienced in obtaining information upon which they could depend and these statements elicited from Napoleon the following characteristic directions for securing accurate intelligence:—

"Send parties out. Let them carry off sometimes the priest, sometimes the alcade, the chief of a convent, the master of the post or his deputy, and, above all, the letters. Put them under arrest until they speak. * * * * When we know how to take measures of vigour and force, it is easy to get news. * * * * It is a fact, that when we are not in a desert, but in a peopled country, if the general is not well instructed, it is because he is ignorant of his trade."—*Despatches of Napoleon.*

fatal security, of which he would avail himself. Hence, the Duke of Dantzic was especially directed to content himself with observing the Spanish armies closely, and avoid any offensive movement, until Napoleon, in person, should arrive. These orders, circumstances rendered it difficult for Lefebre to obey; and if the French Emperor had intended himself to have been the destroyer of those opposed to his usurpation, he found operations already commenced by one of his lieutenants, and the results had neither brilliancy nor advantages to excuse Lefebre's precipitancy, and justify him for disobedience of his master's orders.

The system of acting on the defensive, observed by Joseph Buonaparte, in accordance with the injunctions of Napoleon, were mistaken by Blake for indications of timidity in his enemy, and encouraged that wrong-headed man to become the assailant. While Romana was cautiously advancing towards Bilboa, and the army of Estremadura upon Burgos, Blake rashly determined to attack the French at Zornosa. Merlin, who commanded a French brigade there, at once abandoned the town, and fell back to Durango, where Lefebre had concentrated the divisions of Sebastiani, Laval, and Villatte. The Spanish general was totally ignorant of the force he was about to attack. He believed himself opposed to two divisions only, and calculated not merely on defeating the French troops in his front, but on cutting off Ney's corps, amounting to sixteen thousand men. How far the operations of such a miserable leader were likely to prove successful, may be inferred from the single fact, that, though unopposed, in six days he had only marched five leagues, and his troops were so wretchedly disposed, that, with thirty-six thousand men, he found himself actually upon the field of battle, with seventeen thousand infantry unsupported by a single gun.

Lefebre's intelligence respecting the strength of Blake's force, led the French marshal to believe that he had, most

probably, fifty thousand men to contend with;* but he determined to fall upon his adversary at once. The French "corps d'armée" mustered twenty-five thousand men. These the Duke of Dantzic formed into three columns, and, favoured by a thick fog, he suddenly advanced, and drove back the Spanish vanguard, with the division of Villatte. The attacks of Sebastiani and Laval were equally prompt and successful. The day cleared suddenly, and discovered Blake's infantry mobbed together in masses, upon which the French artillery opened with terrible effect. The Spaniards were driven from every position where they attempted to make a stand—and passing Zornosa in the greatest confusion, they reached Bilboa during the night, and next day, crossing the Salcedon, took post at Nava.

Acevedo, who had endeavoured to join Blake by marching to Valmaceda, was in imminent danger of being cut off by Villatte's division; and Blake, to save his comrade, passed the bridge at Nava during the night of the 4th, and at day-break occupied the heights of Orantia. The Spaniards, by superior numbers, forced Villatte to return slowly across the Salcedon, and on the appearance of Acevedo, the French general continued his retreat; and although two Spanish regiments had got completely in his rear, he gallantly broke through them, and reached Guenes, with the loss of a gun, some baggage, and a considerable number of men.

While these operations† had been going on, Napoleon's mighty effort was already in rapid execution, and the great roads from Bayonne to Vittoria were covered with masses of

* "In fact the Spanish generals were so little guided by the rules of war, that before their incapacity was understood, their very errors, being too gross for belief, contributed to their safety."—*Napier*.

† *Napier*, in his review of these operations, which had continued for eleven days, in alluding to Blake's conduct, observes— "He omitted no error that the circumstances rendered it possible to commit; and then, as if ashamed of the single judicious movement that occurred," (the night march on Orantia,) "he would not profit by it."

troops, hurrying to that point, from which the thunderbolt that should annihilate Spanish freedom should be launched.

"The force in Germany was concentrated on the side of Austria. Denmark was evacuated, and one hundred thousand soldiers were withdrawn from the Prussian states. The army of Italy was powerfully reinforced, and placed under the command of Prince Eugene, who was assisted by Marshal Massena. Murat also, who had succeeded Joseph in the kingdom of Naples, was directed to assemble an army on the shores of Calabria, and to threaten Sicily. In short, no measures that prudence could suggest, were neglected by this wonderful man, to whom the time required by Austria for the mere preparation of a campaign, seemed sufficient for the subjugation of the whole Peninsula."*

By an ordonnance issued in September, the troops already serving in the Peninsula were to be incorporated with the corps drafted from Germany and France, and the whole divided into eight "corps d'armée," each "adapted to act with facility, as a component part of a large army, and provided with light cavalry, a parc and train of artillery, engineers, sappers and miners, and a complete civil administration, to enable it to take the field as an independent force."† The Imperial Guard, the heavy cavalry, and a strong artillery, were not included in this general arrangement, but formed an immense reserve.

According to this new organization of Napoleon's peninsular army, the first corps was commanded by Victor, the second by Bessiers, the third by Moncey; Lefebvre had the fourth, Mortier the fifth, Ney the sixth; the seventh was given to Gouvion St. Cyr, and Junot commanded the eighth.‡

* Napier.

† Ibid.

‡ The French marshals, in all peninsular details, were sometimes designated by the titles their bravery and talents had achieved, and sometimes by their hereditary surnames. To prevent any confusion from this indifferent use of

The French Emperor reached Bayonne on the 3d of November, and remained there until the 8th. The news of Lefebvre's affairs with Blake, and the way in which Joseph had employed Mouton's division, by moving it to Barbarena, displeased Napoleon. The first, because he wished that the Spanish commanders should be left in a dreamy security, until all should be rife for "one fell swoop," that should exterminate them; the latter, because he considered Mouton's safety had been imperilled by placing him between the armies of Blake and Belvidere. To secure this corps, the second was ordered to Burgos, and the first to Alameda, while Lefebvre was enjoined to renew his operations from the side of Bilbao. Blake, at the same time, was moving upon the same place, with an army half-starved, half-clothed, and half-armed;* perfectly uncon-

names and titles, the following brief notice of "these splendid soldiers" has been appended:—

BERTHIER . . Prince of Neufchatel; a particular favourite of Napoleon; was chief of the Emperor's staff, and Major-General of the French army.

MURAT Grand Duke of Berg, and afterwards King of Naples; the best cavalry officer of his day. He was married to the sister of Napoleon.

MASSENA . . Prince of Essling, and Duke of Rivoli.

NEY Prince of Moskwa, and Duke of Elchingen.

SOULT Duke of Dalmatia.

VICTOR Duke of Belluno.

BESSIERS . . . Duke of Istria.

MONCEY . . . Duke of Cornegliano.

LEFEBVRE . . . Duke of Dantzic.

MORTIER . . . Duke of Treviso.

JUNOT Duke of Abrantes.

MARMONT . . . Duke of Ragusa.

SUCHET Duke of Albufera.

LANNES . . . Duke of Montebello.

AUGEREAU . . Duke of Castiglione.

LOURDAN . . Marshal of France.

* "From the 23d of October they had been continually in the open air, among the mountains of Biscay, during rainy nights and the most inclement weather. They were without hats; great part of them half clothed, and barefooted, and they had been six days without bread, wine, or spirits, indeed with-

scious that fifty thousand chosen troops were in his front, and that his right flank was turned, and a strong corps already in his rear. It was under such circumstances, that this unhappy man actually became assailant. Supposing that the French force in Guenes did not exceed fifteen hundred men, he detached two divisions to cut off their retreat, by seizing the bridge at Sodupe, while, with the remainder of the corps, he attacked in front. He was completely beaten, and night alone saved him from destruction; while one of his detached divisions was dispersed at Sopoerte, and the other driven through Portugal, and forced to save itself in Santander.

At last Blake saw the dangerous position in which he had so rashly placed himself, and retreated to a strong position in his rear,* by Valmaceda and Nava. Romana's infantry joined him during the retreat, and a position of considerable strength was taken up by the Spaniards, where the roads from Santander, Villarcayo, and Reynosa intersect each other.

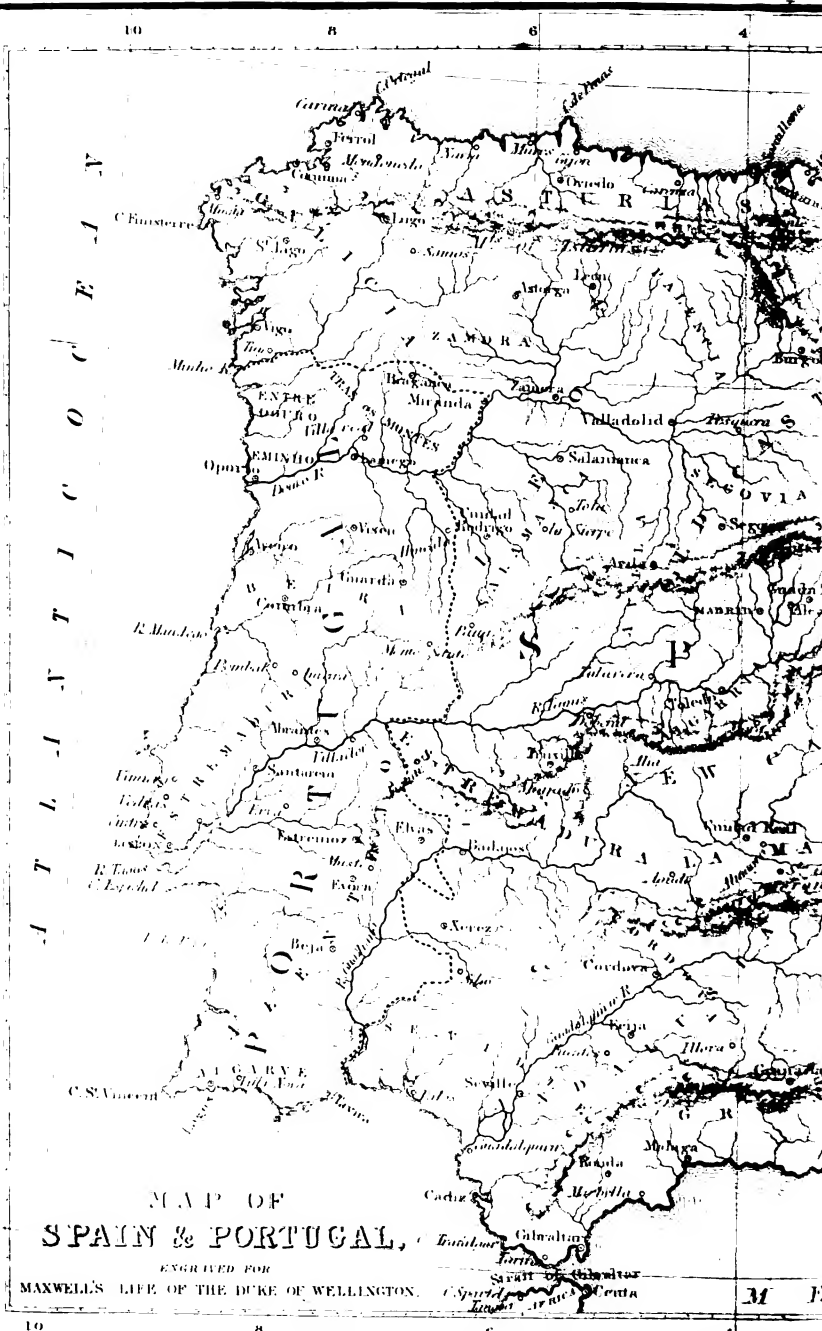
At this eventful period Napoleon's arrival at Vittoria was announced. On the evening of the 8th of November he reached the city gates, and was welcomed in due form by the civil and military authorities. Declining the use of a mansion which had been prepared for his reception, "he jumped from his horse, entered the first small inn that he observed, and calling for his maps, and a report of the situation of the armies on both sides,† proceeded to study out any other supply of food than the sheep and cattle which were to be found among the mountains; and there had been a considerable desertion among the young recruits."—*Southey*.

* Espinosa de los Monteros.

† The French army at this moment was thus disposed:—Victor was pressing Blake, and Lefebvre moving upon Villarcayo, by Medina. The second corps were united at Briviesca, and the third detached at Tafalla, Peraltea, Caparosa, and Estrella. The line between Vittoria and Miranda was occupied by the Imperial Guard, the sixth corps, and the reserve; while Lagrange, with his division, connected the positions of the third and sixth corps. Neither the fifth nor eighth "corps d'armée" had arrived, but both were on their march for the frontier.

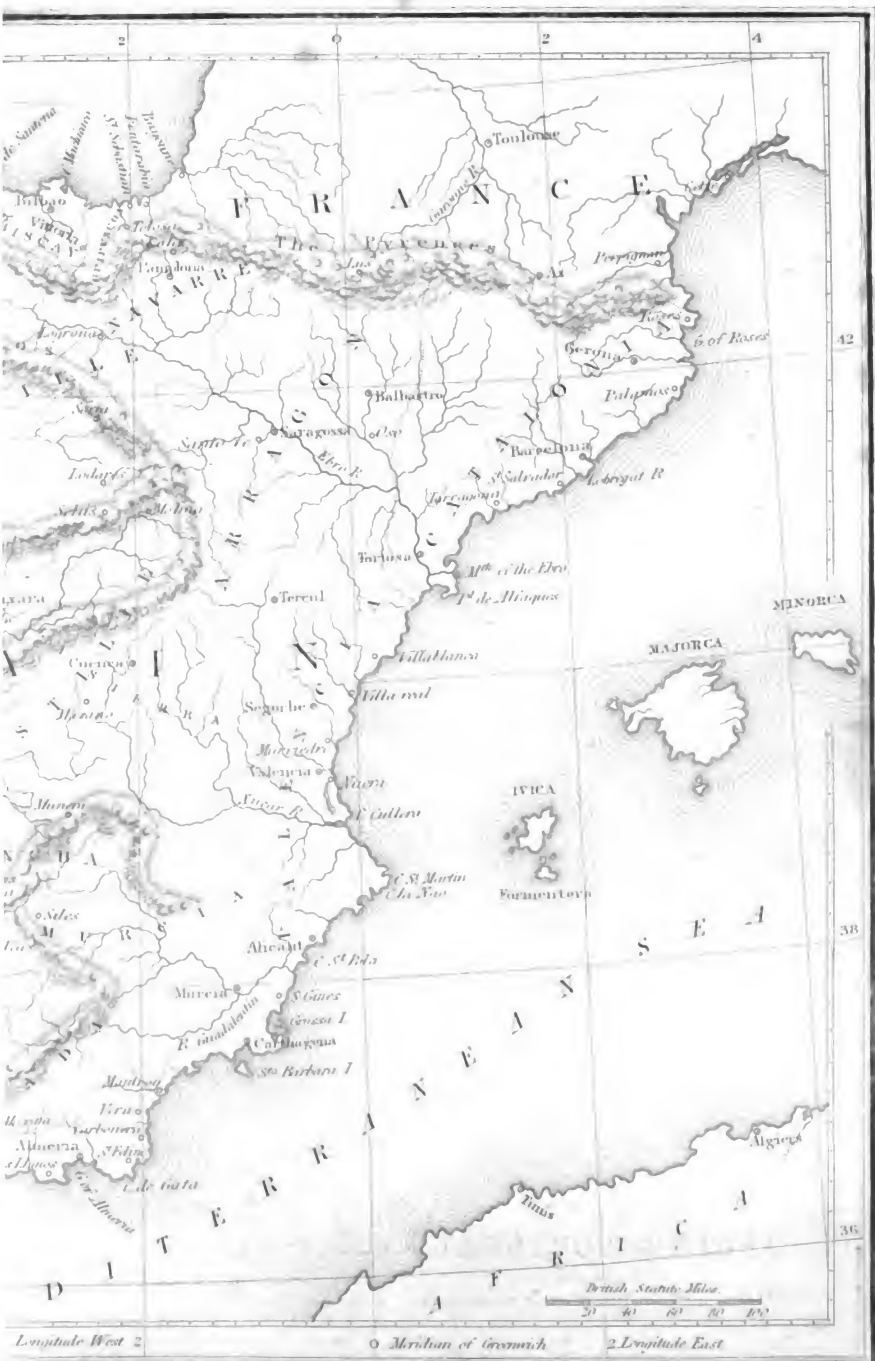
the plan of his campaign. Remarkable for the rapidity of his arrangements, but a short time was consumed in deciding upon a course of operations, varied, complicated, and extensive; and in two hours orders were issued to the marshals, and the French corps was instantly put in motion.





MAP OF SPAIN & PORTUGAL.

ENGRAVED FOR
MAXWELL'S LIFE OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.



Longitude West 2

Meridian of Greenwich

Longitude East 2

CHAPTER XXVI.

FRENCH DISPOSITIONS—SOULT'S OPERATIONS—BELVIDERE'S ARMY AND POSITION—BATTLE OF GAMONAL—FALL OF BURGOS—BATTLE OF ESPINOSA—BLAKE'S INCAPACITY—SOULT'S SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS—NAPOLEON ENTERS BURGOS—DUKE OF MONTEBELLO—IGNORANCE OF THE SPANISH GENERALS—LANNES ADVANCES AGAINST CASTANOS—BATTLE OF TUDELA—PLANS OF NAPOLEON—DEFEAT OF SAN JUAN—HIS MURDER—CASTANOS SUCCEEDED BY LA PENA—PROCEEDINGS AT MADRID—STATE OF THE CAPITAL—SUMMONS TO SURRENDER SENT IN—NAPOLEON COMMENCES OPERATIONS TO REDUCE IT—MORLA PROPOSES TERMS—HIS RECEPTION BY NAPOLEON—CASTELLAR ESCAPES—MADRID SURRENDERS.

THE French armies appeared to have imbibed fresh life from the presence of their Emperor; and nothing could surpass the rapidity with which the opening movements of the campaign were executed. By the new arrangements, Moncey was directed to leave a division in front of Pampeluna, and concentrate the remainder of his corps at Lodosa, to hold the Spanish divisions on the Aragon in check. Colbert's light cavalry marched upon Logrono. The first and fourth corps were directed against Blake; and Soult, with the second, against Belvidere;* while Napoleon, with the guards and reserve, followed the movements of the Duke of Dalmatia.

Soult, with his characteristic celerity, had reached Briviesca on the morning of the 9th, taken the command of the corps to which he had been appointed, and instantly commenced his march for the terrace of Monasterio, which overlooks the plains of Burgos. There he established

* "The Conde de Belvidere, a very young man, perfectly unaccustomed to command, had been left in charge of the Estremaduran army at this most critical moment—a circumstance in unison with the other arrangements of the Spanish government."—*Leith Hay*.

his head quarters, detaching his light cavalry, under Franceschi, to Arlanzon, with orders to cross that river, descend the left bank, and thus cut off all communication with the capital.

Before daylight on the 10th, Soult broke up from Monasterio; and at six o'clock, Lasalle's cavalry reached Villa Fria. Belvidere, who had taken a position at Gamonal, attacked the French general with the Spanish cavalry, supported by a division of infantry and some guns. Lasalle retired slowly to Rio Bena, where the French infantry arrived at eight o'clock; and then advancing instantly, he obliged Belvidere, in turn, to fall back upon the main body of his army.

The Spanish right occupied a wood, having a flat and open space between it and the Arlanzon, while their left was drawn up within the walled park of Vellimer. Their front was protected by thirty guns, and the regular troops were displayed in line, with some ten thousand armed peasants formed on the heights behind them. Belvidere's was justly considered the flower of the Spanish armies. It was completely equipped with English arms and appointments, and comprised the Walloon and Spanish guards, the regiments of Majorca, Lafra, and Alcantara, the royal carbineers and Valencian hussars, with a body of gentlemen volunteers—in all amounting to eleven thousand infantry and twelve hundred cavalry, exclusive of nearly the same number of irregulars and partisans.

The French attack was made with the impetuosity for which their troops were always so remarkable. Lasalle's cavalry seized the plain between the wood and the Arlanzon; and the infantry, as they rapidly came up, forming into columns of regiments, regardless of the fire of the Spanish guns, which had opened from the whole line, at once plunged into the wood and traversed it at the charging pace. Mouton's division led the attack, supported by that of Bonnet. After a short resistance, the Spanish right at once gave way; the left, almost immediately,

followed the example; and, in a mob, the fugitive troops rushed into the streets of Burgos, closely pursued by the French light troops. Bessiers, with the heavy cavalry, rode at speed to the point where the Madrid road crosses the Arlanzon,* cutting down all whom he overtook, and seizing some cannon which remained; while, on the other side of the river, the light cavalry of Franceschi sabred the Catalonian light troops. "Never," says Napier, "was a defeat more instantaneous, or more complete. Two thousand five hundred Spaniards were killed; twenty guns, thirty ammunition waggons, six pair of colours, and nine hundred men, were taken on the field. Four thousand muskets were found unbroken, and the fugitives were dispersed far and wide."

A corps of students from the universities of Leon and Salamanca were attached to the beaten army. They offered a desperate resistance, and their loss was proportionately severe. "These youths, the pride and the hope of many a generous family, were in the advanced guard. They displayed that courage which might be looked for in men of their condition, and at their time of life: twice they repulsed the French infantry, and when Bessiers with the horse came upon their flank, fell, almost to a man, where they had been stationed."†

In Burgos, all the stores and magazines of the Spanish army had been deposited. They fell, of course, into the hands of the victors; and the city was given up to plunder. "On the 8th, it had contained a population following their different occupations in apparent security; it was also crowded with Spanish troops; every thing appeared cheerful, and calculated to inspire confidence. Upon the 10th, it was deserted, and occupied solely by the dead bodies of its countrymen, while the rush of fugitives, and

* "The Walloon and Spanish guards fought for some time with considerable determination and coolness; but the arrival of the Duke of Istria with the cavalry put a period to the action. The Spanish cavalry did not await the issue of a charge, but turned and fled, leaving the flanks of the army completely unprotected."

† Southey.

the crash of pursuing cavalry, gave at intervals a dreadful variety to the scene, rendered more awful by the incessant fire of artillery, and the noises produced by the work of pillage, which had commenced in all directions."*

There was no time afforded for the beaten corps to rally and rejoin their colours. "The indefatigable marshal (Soult), who was still upon the post-horse which he mounted at Briviesca, not content with travelling from Bayonne to Burgos, taking the latter town, and gaining a decisive victory, within the space of fifty hours, now rallied his corps and detached them in pursuit."† One division pushed on towards Lerma, another in the direction of Valencia and Valladolid, while the marshal, with a third corps, marched on Reynosa, to cut Blake off should he attempt to retreat towards the plains of Leon.

On reaching Espinosa on the evening of the 9th, Blake had determined to avail himself of the strong position which that place afforded, to rest his divisions, reduced by casualties and desertion to twenty-five thousand men. He disposed his army, with its left, consisting of the Asturians and the first corps, on the high ground which covers the Santander road; his centre, the third division and reserve, crossed the road of Reynosa; on a bold height on the right of the town, the second division was posted; two miles in front of the right, Romana's infantry occupied a wood; and behind the centre of his position, his vanguard, with six pieces of light artillery, were placed in reserve.

It was late in the afternoon before Victor commenced his attack, by driving the Spaniards from the wood; but Blake having promptly reinforced the infantry of Romana with his third division, obstinately maintained the contest. The Spanish centre was also assailed, and the left threatened by the French light troops. Still the Spaniards held their ground with firmness, although discouraged by the

* Leith Hay.

† Napier.

loss of two of their best generals, St. Roman and Requiélme, who were both mortally wounded. Night ended the contest,—Victor retaining the wood he had carried, with a ridge of heights parallel to the centre of the Spanish position.

At break of day, the attack was vigorously resumed. Covered by a cloud of sharp-shooters, Maison, under their fire, marched rapidly by his right along the Spanish centre, and furiously assailed Blake's first division and the Asturians. Blake supported them with a column of grenadiers, and endeavoured with three regiments from the centre to fall upon Maison during his march. But the opening fire was fatal to the Asturians. Three generals fell, the troops fled in confusion, while the French general pressed his advantage, and completely cut off the line of retreat by the Santander and Espinosa roads. At the same time, the Spanish centre and right were simultaneously assaulted. The French attack was irresistible. On every point, Blake's army broke, threw away their arms, and in helpless crowds rushed towards the Trueba, which river flowed in the rear of the position.

Never was a rout more complete. "Some tried the fords, some rushed to the town, some fled to the right and left; but the weather was bad, the roads deep, the country rugged and difficult, and the overthrow was fatal."* The whole of the artillery, the baggage, and the ammunition, were taken on this disastrous occasion; and, with the exception of seven thousand unarmed fugitives "without spirit and without hope," whom Blake collected at Reynosa, the whole of the Spanish army disbanded itself, carrying dismay and alarm over the whole of the adjacent provinces.

Still expecting to retire with the wretched remnant of his army by Aguilar del Campo, and join the English corps under Baird, whose advanced guard was at Astorga, the Spanish general was not aware that his retreat was

* Southey.

already cut off by Soult's cavalry, while Lefebre was marching rapidly on Reynosa. On the 13th, the advanced guard of the second corps attacked him, totally dispersed the relics of the Spanish levies, and drove them for shelter into the Asturian mountains, until, with little more than four thousand disorganized soldiers, Blake halted at Arnedo, at which place the Marquess Romana joined him, and assumed the command of an army now existing but in name.

During this brief and ruinous campaign, Blake showed himself to be a man of much courage and no discretion. Plans feebly conceived, were easily disconcerted by any unexpected reverse; and as the Spanish general wanted the chief qualifications a commander should possess—decision and readiness of resource, he was quite incapable of adopting dispositions, which the altering circumstances of a campaign are so constantly requiring. Operations originally designed against an inferior force, were foolishly carried out against one in every respect superior. The *élite* of the army—those troops which Napoleon husbanded with such care for some decisive crisis—were always brought unnecessarily under fire; and in some cases, Blake is accused of having most wantonly exposed them.* Without any commissariat, he advanced into a country already denuded of every article of supply; and at Espinosa, the accidental arrival of a quantity of biscuits, forwarded by an English general, saved his wretched soldiers from starvation. No wonder, then, that an army thus commanded, should have been so totally destroyed.

In the mean time, Soult's operations were promptly followed up. While the fourth corps, after a brief halt,

* "Another and more lamentable error was, that the troops from the Baltic, the only thoroughly disciplined part of his force, were brought into action after the first defeat, and exposed by single battalions to bear the brunt of every conflict; and thus were sacrificed in detail, giving melancholy proof, by the devoted courage with which they stood their ground, of what they could have effected, if, as a body, they had been brought into some fair field of battle."—*Southey*.

moved towards Carrion and Valladolid, the Duke of Dalmatia concentrated the second at Reynosa, and after seizing Santander, which he garrisoned with a corps under Bonnet, pressed his advantages with a perseverance, that marked him "every inch" a soldier. "He spread his columns over the whole of the Montagna, pursuing, attacking, and dispersing every body of Spaniards that yet had held together, capturing their baggage, and filling all places with alarm."* The last of the partisans were driven into the Asturian mountains—all opposition was ended—the country effectually secured—and while the French communications were rendered perfectly safe, Leon and Castile were open to their incursions. † "These great advantages, the result of Napoleon's admirable combinations, the fruits of ten days' active exertion, obtained so easily, and yet so decisive of the fate of the campaign, prove the weakness of the system upon which the Spanish and British governments were at this time acting; if that can be called a system where no one general knew what another had done—was doing—or about to do." ‡

The Emperor had arrived at Briviesca on the evening of the 9th, and instantly proceeded to Burgos,§ which was made head-quarters. This city was the grand point from which Napoleon's operations were to be continued; and the battles of Gamonal and Espinosa having secured the north of Spain, the next grand stroke was to be directed against the armies of Palafox and Castanos. The front of the French army was consequently changed, the second corps being placed in observation to cover Burgos, where magazines

* Napier.

† "Unresisted,—for no troops opposed their advance—these horsemen swept over the face of the country. The towns through which they passed were either deserted, or the inhabitants subjected to heavy contributions. All thoughts of contending against them vanished; and the impression made was even greater than circumstances warranted."—*Leith Hay*.

‡ Napier.

§ From Burgos, Napoleon issued a Proclamation, offering, with a few exceptions, pardon to all who within a month from his arrival in Madrid, should lay down their arms, and renounce all connexion with the English.

were established, and supplies and reinforcements had been directed to assemble.

All the marshals were now busily employed, with the exception of the Duke of Montebello. Lannes was deservedly a great favourite with Napoleon, and a serious accident he had recently sustained, occasioned much uneasiness to the Emperor. In crossing the mountains near Tolosa, the marshal's horse slipped in the frozen snow, and rolled over his rider, who was taken up insensible, and to all appearance dead. Baron Larrey, Napoleon's surgeon, had recourse to a very singular remedy, practised by "the savages of Newfoundland" upon bruised sailors who had suffered shipwreck; and in this case the treatment proved eminently successful.*

Although the rapidity was unequalled with which Napoleon's first operations had been executed, it is surprising what little effect the destruction of two armies produced upon the conduct of the Spanish government. It is almost incredible, but it is true, that "these misfortunes were still unknown at Tudela,† and disregarded in the capital; and the Spanish army of the centre, by the instant advantages which Napoleon derived from the defeats of Belvidere and

* "He was carried to Vittoria in a state of great danger, his body covered with those discolourations which show that the small vessels of the skin are ruptured, the abdomen swollen, the extremities cold, suffering acute pain, and with all the symptoms of inflammation in the intestines, from the shock and the pressure. * * * A large sheep having been first stunned by a blow on the neck, was immediately flayed, the reeking skin was sewn round the marshal's body, while his limbs were wrapped in warm flannels, and some cups of weak tea were given him. He felt immediate relief, complaining only of a painful sense of formication, and of the manner in which the skin seemed to attract every part wherewith it was in contact. In the course of ten minutes he was asleep; when he awoke, after two hours, the body was streaming with perspiration, the dangerous symptoms were relieved, and on the fifth day he was able to mount on horseback and follow the army."—*Southey*.

† "The inhabitants of Tordesillas appeared perfectly tranquil, expressing no alarm on the subject of French visitation; nor had they heard of the enemy's cavalry having penetrated into the district in their immediate vicinity."—*Leith Hay*.

Blake, was turned and cut off from Madrid, before Castanos was apprised that the campaign had actually commenced.

With their usual stupidity, the Central Junta ascribed the calamities that had attended their arms to every thing but the true cause: their misfortunes were attributed to inactivity on the part of Castanos, and that general was superseded by Romana, "precisely at the moment when it was impossible for the latter to reach the army he was to lead."* The wreck of Belvidere's corps, and some disposable troops at Madrid, were sent to Somosierra and Segovia; the command of the former being given to General St. Juan, and that of the latter to General Heredia. An intermediate camp was also established at Sepulveda.

It would be a waste of time, to notice the absurd plans and conduct of the Spanish commanders, who, in ignorance of the disasters that had befallen their confederates, were actually devising operations to cut off Napoleon's rear-guard. As usual, these worthless soldiers were jealous of each other, disunited in their counsels, and obstinate in their opinions. But the dream of advancing was quickly dispelled: Ney, marching rapidly by Aranda and Almazara, entered Soria on the 21st; and Castanos, with a divided army, was obliged to fall back immediately, and occupy heights in the neighbourhood of Tudela.

The Duke of Montebello, strengthened by a fresh division under Maurice Mathieu, had united thirty thousand infantry, five thousand cavalry, with sixty pieces of cannon, at Lodosa, on the 22d, and early on the following morning, his advanced pickets were in front of the Spanish outposts. The main body of that army, amounting to nearly fifty thousand men, was in position on the chain of heights which extends for fully ten miles, from Tudela to Tarazona. The whole of the dispositions were bad—for the corps were neither connected with each other, nor protected by intermediate posts. One glance betrayed the weakness of his enemy to the French marshal and Lannes instantly

* Napier.

commenced his attack, by carrying the high ground that overlooks Tudela.

The division of Morlot advanced against the heights; Maurice Mathieu, with the cavalry of Lefebvre Desnouettes, attacked the centre; and Lagrange advanced against the Spanish corps posted at Cascante. For a short time Morlot was successfully resisted; but having succeeded in carrying an olive wood and a low hill that connected the centre of the position, he broke the Spanish line; while Lefebvre's cavalry, charging through the opening, wheeled sharply to his left, and threw the Spanish right into a disorder, from which it never could recover. La Pena, having forced the advanced cavalry back, attacked Lagrange in turn, and was beaten and driven from the field on Tarazona, where three Spanish divisions had remained quietly as lookers on. Their right wing and centre fled from the field with precipitation; and such was the activity of the refugees, that some reached Zaragoza before night. The left wing had attempted an orderly retreat, but the appearance of Ney's cavalry from Soria produced a panic which the accidental explosion of a magazine increased. The whole at once gave way—a mob of fugitives covered the roads and choked the bridges—nearly ten thousand of these wretched troops were killed or wounded, several thousands were made prisoners, while thirty pieces of artillery, and the entire baggage and ammunition, were captured by the French. Of the grand army of the centre, to whom the Junta had professedly entrusted the security of the capital, fifteen thousand escaped to Zaragoza, and as many more were collected on the 25th at Calatayud, but they were nearly starved, and had broken into open mutiny.

That Castanos, or any portion of the Spanish army, should have escaped, occasioned considerable annoyance to Napoleon. Ney had not given satisfaction to the Emperor; and although that Marshal had obeyed the strict letter of his orders by halting at Soria, which he reached

on the 21st, his declining to follow the advice of General Jomini, who urged him to march directly on Calatayud, was certainly the cause to which Castanos might ascribe his escape from total ruin—for one rapid march on Medina Celi and Agreda would have cut through the line of his retreat. Ney's unusual inactivity has been imputed to different causes: by some it has been attributed to his jealousy of Lannes; by others, to the marshal's having taken offence at the intemperance of Jomini's remonstrances; while not a few, ascribed his halt at Soria to motives more unworthy than both.*

After the dispersion of the Spanish army at Tudela, Lannes continued the pursuit of Palafox, with directions from the Emperor to seize the Monte Torrero, and, by offering an amnesty to the inhabitants of Zaragoza, obtain possession of that valuable city by fair measures, if such could succeed. Madrid was his own great object; and with admirable judgment and celerity, he took preparatory measures to ensure its reduction. Ney was ordered to pursue the army of the centre, and the fourth corps was advanced from Carrion to Segovia; Napoleon's design being to open the roads leading to that city, which the Spanish camp at Sepulveda had blocked, while he should force the passes of the Somosierra, outmarch Castanos, and thus prevent him from reaching or succouring Madrid.

Some delay in the execution of this masterly movement was occasioned by the advance of Ney and Moncey in a wrong direction; and this obliged the Marshals to counter-march for two days. Much advantage might have resulted had their orders been more promptly transmitted. Ney retiring from Zaragoza gave a breathing time to the inhabitants, and allowed the first alarm to subside, which the appearance of the French had occasioned, and enabled

* "It has been asserted that the plunder of Soria detained him. The falsehood of the latter charge is evident from the fact, that, with the requisition for some shoes and great coats, no contribution was exacted from Soria, and no pillage took place at all."—*Napier*.

Castanos to reach Sigüenza, after a partial action, and with trifling loss.

Napoleon broke up from Aranda on the 28th, and reached Boncequillas on the following day, with the first corps, the guards, and the reserve. An attack on Sepulveda had been repulsed by the Spaniards, but some unaccountable panic induced them to abandon the position, and hurry off towards Segovia. In the mean time, St. Juan, with twelve thousand men and sixteen pieces of artillery, had occupied the Somosierra, the guns being disposed to sweep the steep and exposed road by which the pass could only be approached, and the infantry formed on either side, in lines one above the other, and protected, where the ground required it, by entrenchments. A more formidable position has rarely been attacked, and never was success more gloriously and more easily achieved.

The attack commenced at day-break. St. Juan's right and left were assailed by three battalions each, while three others advanced along the causeway, supported by six guns. On Napoleon's arrival after the firing had continued for some time, he found his wings extended and skirmishing along the sides of the Sierra, while a heavy fog hung over the summit of the heights, and hid the upper part of the Spanish position from his view. The fire from the battery in the gorge of the mountain was well sustained—the light troops had made no progress—and with the boldness worthy of a great general, he decided on an attempt which few would venture to justify, and that was to carry the position with his cavalry. The lancers of the guard were ordered to charge and seize the cannon. Instantly, these gallant troops rode furiously up the causeway, led by General Krazinski, their commander. The foremost ranks of the Poles were exterminated by a sweeping fire of grape and musquetry. They recoiled, but they were rallied; and favoured by the mist, they reached the Spanish battery, and commenced sabring such of the gunners as kept their ground. Nothing could surpass the dastardly conduct of St. Juan's infantry; they fled

after delivering one disorderly volley, abandoned a position almost impregnable, leaving the pass, their arms, ammunition, and baggage, in the possession of a handful of daring horsemen.

The rout was general. St. Juan fought his way through the French who attempted to cut him off, reached his camp at Segovia, and with the relics of his troops united to the corps under Heredia, endeavoured to reach Madrid. Terrified by the very appearance of a soldier, a patrol of French cavalry changed their course of flight, and the rabble fled towards Talavera de la Reyna, "and there consummated their intolerable villany, by murdering their unfortunate general, and fixing his mangled body to a tree; after which, dispersing, they carried dishonour and fear into their respective provinces."*

While the French Emperor advanced rapidly on the capital, the wreck of the army under Castanos, fled towards the Tagus. Here, that general resigned his command to La Pena, with difficulty escaping the fate of St. Juan, from the ferocity of his own fugitive troops, excited by the falsehoods promulgated by the Central Junta, who, on the first appearance of danger, had abandoned the capital, and sought shelter in Badajoz.

Notwithstanding the infamous desertion of the government, Madrid was erroneously supposed capable of being defended. The Marquess of Castellar was in that city, with six thousand regular troops and sixteen pieces of artillery. The citizens were in arms,—a junta had been appointed for the time being,—and the neighbouring peasants had risen "en masse," and joined the soldiers under Castellar. "Now indeed was the time for that city to have emulated Zaragoza; and the spirit was not wanting in the inhabitants, had there been one commanding mind to have directed them. Priests and regulars came forward to bear arms, and old men, and women, and boys, offered themselves for the service of their country; for this pur-

* Napier.

pose, leaving their houses open, and their property to take its chance, they employed themselves in opening trenches, erecting batteries, and barricading the streets. The pavements were torn up, and women and children carried stones to the tops of the houses, to be used from thence against the enemy."*

Such were the Spanish preparations, when, early on the morning of the 2d of December, the French cavalry, under Bessiers, were seen upon the heights that command Madrid, and at noon Napoleon himself appeared. For days the city had been in a fearful state of excitement; but it was a mob-movement, from which no good result could have been hoped. Bells were pealing,—drums beat,—the populace threatened death to the invaders,—but all was an idle and clamorous exhibition, and the preparations for defence evinced the greatest ignorance in those who had pretended to direct them.†

Madrid differs from most other towns of equal magnitude. It has no suburb, and the moment the wall is passed, the palaces‡ of the court appear in all directions.

From a census of the population, taken in the years of 1787 and 1797, an increase of 20,000 had accrued within those periods, that of 1797 amounting to 167,607 souls. According to this ratio, at the time when Ferdinand abdicated the throne, the population of this great city must have been 190,000 people.

* Southey.

† "The batteries were so low that it was easy for the French to plant their guns where they could completely command them; and they were so near the wall that there was scarcely room to work the artillery, and the men would suffer more from broken stones than the direct effect of the enemy's shot."—*Southey*.

‡ "The residences of the nobility are, in general, very splendid, and calculated to contain the great number of retainers and domestics that, previous to the revolution, appertained to the establishments of many of the grandees. It is stated, that the Duque de Medina Celi formerly had upwards of eight hundred persons, either belonging to his household, or supported exclusively by his munificence. Representative of the first family in Spain, he was also the richest of the grandees, having a revenue of fifteen millions of reals."—*Leith Hay*.

Madrid is very compact—its length not exceeding a mile and three quarters, nor its breadth a mile and a half. The former, computed from the north gate to the Puerta de los Embaxadores; and the latter, from the Puerta de Alcala to the Palacio Nuevo.*

The Retiro overlooks the city, and is connected with Madrid by the southern part of the Prado. This public walk—the noblest probably in Europe—is sheltered by magnificent trees, and here and there, ornamented by beautiful fountains.

Napoleon arrived at noon on the 2d of December, and found the capital in an uproar. The streets were infested by a ferocious mob; the customary cry of treason had been raised, and many innocent persons had already fallen victims to the ferocity of the populace, among whom the Marquess of Perales was the principal.

The first act of the Emperor was to summon the city to surrender, and the officer who bore the mandate narrowly escaped with life. From many causes Madrid was incapable of being long defended. It was exposed—unprotected by outworks of any kind—surrounded by a level country, over which the French cavalry could freely range, and cut off all supplies which might have been attempted to be introduced. The heights which domineer the city were already in possession of the French, and from these Napoleon's artillery could in a few days have laid the place in ashes. At midnight, when the whole of the infantry had arrived, and the guns had been properly disposed, a second

* "The Palacio Nuevo has four fronts, extending each to 470 feet, and the building from the cornice to the base is 100 feet in height. The colmenar stone, with which it is constructed, is remarkable for the purity of its whiteness, and hence its Doric and Ionic columns and pilasters are exceedingly light and elegant. The inner court, 140 feet square, is approached by five southern and one eastern entrances. The internal decorations of the building are magnificent—the fresco painting superb—and the pictures scattered throughout the palace, were once inferior to no collection in the world, as they embraced the best productions of the Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and Flemish artists."—*Leith Hay*.

summons was sent in, and produced an evasive answer. Napoleon was not to be trifled with—his light troops were ordered to carry some houses by assault, while a powerful battery opened on the Retiro, and from an opposite quarter the city was bombarded. The wall of the Retiro was breached, and the building stormed—Vellatte's division following up their first success, by crossing the Prado, and seizing the palace of the Duke of Medina Celi, which completely commanded that side of the capital.

These successes were quite sufficient to dissipate the absurd belief that the capital was to become a second Zaragoza. A deputation waited on Napoleon, to request a suspension of arms, while the populace should be quieted, and the Marquess Castellar persuaded to capitulate. But the French emperor knew that Madrid was at his mercy, and a more unhappy selection could not have been made by the inhabitants, than the person whom they had deputed to obtain easy terms from Napoleon. Morla had commanded at Cadiz, when the French fleet were forced to surrender; and bad as many of the Spanish leaders were, he had acquired a pre-eminence among the worst, for cowardice and treachery. His conduct to Dupont, after that general's capitulation, was infamous—and with unmeasured severity Napoleon alluded in his reply, to the former perfidy of this applicant for clemency. After reproaching him with the murder of French prisoners, and some *attachés* of the Russian embassy, who had been assassinated in the streets; he thus continued:—"The incapacity and cowardice of a general, put into your power troops who capitulated on the field of battle, and that capitulation was violated. You, M. Morla, what sort of an epistle did you write to that general? * * * How dare you then presume to solicit a capitulation—you who violated that of Baylen? * * * Return to Madrid. I give you till six o'clock in the morning: come back at that hour if you have to announce the submission of the people; otherwise you and all your troops shall be put to the sword!

On announcing the failure of his mission, the populace became more outrageous, and renewed a fire from the Prado, by which General Bruyere was killed and Maison was wounded; but on the more respectable portion of the inhabitants, the stern determination of Napoleon had its due effect, and a capitulation was prepared. Castellar, however, refused his consent, and during the night he brought off his troops and their artillery, by that side of Madrid which had not been invested; and early on the following morning, the French troops took possession of the capital.

The greatest order was observed by express command of the Emperor, and the strictest discipline exacted from the soldiery. Every measure which could preserve public tranquillity was adopted—and in a very few days, popular excitement had abated, business recommenced, the theatres were open, and Madrid appeared as quiet and contented, as if Napoleon was resident at the Tuilleries, instead of the chateau of Chamartin, within a league of the city.

While the reduction of the capital was being effected, the wrecks of the Spanish armies under La Pena Albuquerque and Venegas, escaping the pursuit of the French corps detached against them, had united at Guadalaxara. Napoleon sent off Bessiers and Ruffin to reduce them; and they were cut off from La Mancha, and eventually dispersed. A corps under Castanos was also driven from the Tagus—Toledo yielded when the advanced cavalry of the French appeared—in six weeks the campaign was ended—of the Spanish armies scarcely a wreck remained—and the country was at the mercy of the invaders. Napoleon had assumed all the rights of royalty, and done what no legitimate monarch would have dared, or even dreamed of attempting. He abolished the inquisition, curtailed the clergy in numbers, and annihilated the civil influence they had exercised so long and so injuriously. The tyrannical power claimed by the nobles was destroyed, feudal rights suppressed, and one grand estate of justice established.

Such were Napoleon's acts. Regarding his intentions, on his part there was no concealment. To the deputation who waited upon him at Chamartin, from Madrid, to beg that Joseph should be restored to them, the Emperor declared that the Bourbons had ceased to reign, and that British influence on the continent should be exterminated. The object dearest to his heart was not forgotten, and with peculiar emphasis, he declared that the English armies should be driven from the Peninsula. In that declaration, a melancholy proof of the fallacy of human judgment was conveyed. By those island soldiers thus destined for destruction, the death blow to his power was to be stricken—and an army, in his "mind's eye" already exterminated, was destined to overturn an empire cemented by a sea of blood, and raised upon the ruins of half the continent of Europe.



CHAPTER XXVII.

STATE OF SPAIN AFTER THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA—SIR JOHN MOORE
CROSSES THE FRONTIER—BAIRD LANDS AT CORUNNA—SHAMEFUL MISRE-
PRESENTATIONS OF THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES—EARLY DIFFICULTIES OF
MOORE—MR. FRERE—SIR JOHN HOPE ARRIVES AT ALBA DE TORMES—
ROMANA'S ARMY—MOORE ADVANCES—AFFAIR AT RUEDA—INTERCEPTED
DESPATCH—MOORE DETERMINES TO ATTACK SOULT ON THE CARRION—
AFFAIR AT SAHAGUN—MOVEMENTS OF SOULT—MOORE RECEIVES ALARM-
ING INTELLIGENCE—NAPOLEON'S ADVANCE—PASSAGE OF THE GUADARAMA
—PREPARATIONS FOR A RETREAT BY MOORE—NAPOLEON'S MOVEMENTS
AND DESIGNS.

THE period which elapsed from the Convention of Cintra, until Sir Arthur Wellesley was a second time despatched to the Peninsula to assume the direction of the British troops, though brief, was crowded with events. Spanish armies had mustered in the field; the alternations of good and evil fortune had attended them; they had been victorious, and they had been beaten; while Europe watched the progress of the struggle, with the wish, rather than the hope, that the contest should terminate in favour of the oppressed. England had partially put forward her strength; she had her troops in close proximity to the scene, where a nation's rights were about to be decided; and yet, judging from appearances, that force was to remain inactive. Time rolled on—the season when a British army might have been usefully employed had passed. Then, and not till then, Sir John Moore received his orders to advance—and when the tide of fortune was already far upon the ebb, he was instructed to attempt what circumstances had rendered

impracticable,* and cooperate with armies for whose ruin the edict had gone forth, and whose destruction had only been deferred, until Napoleon in person could visit with his wrath a people who had renounced his authority, asserted their independence, and left the issue "to God and their own good swords." A holier cause never roused a nation to resistance. None struck for freedom with bolder protestations; and none, in their efforts to achieve it, proved themselves more worthless, if imbecility towards their enemies, and faithlessness to their friends, be proofs.

The order for Sir John Moore to march into Spain reached Lisbon on the 6th of October: but three weeks elapsed in completing the arrangements for advancing, as it was necessary that the divisions should be organized anew, and in the very outset, the means of transport or supply were obtained with such difficulty, that it required the greatest energy in the English general to surmount it. The season was far advanced, the roads in Portugal are extremely bad, and no magazines for the subsistence of the army had been provided: these considerations, therefore, induced Sir John, for the better accommodation of his soldiers on their march, to move the divisions by different routes, and unite the whole at Salamanca. The army was therefore ordered to proceed in four divisions: one, under General Paget, by Elvas and Alcantara; a second, under Beresford, by Coimbra and Almeida; Fraser, with the third, marched by Abrantes; while the fourth, under General Hope, consisting of the artillery, with four battalions of infantry and the Hussar brigade, moved forward

* "A body of really good troops, cooperating with the Spanish armies, and vigorously attacking the French before they became reinforced, might have totally changed the aspect of affairs; but what great impression was to be expected from 30,000 British taking the field against the enormous strength of the enemy, particularly after the total discomfiture of any Spanish force with which they were destined to act, or by joining whom, they might in any degree assimilate in numbers to those opposed?"—*Leith Hay*.

towards Madrid, by Elvas,* Badajoz, Truxillo, and Talavera de la Reyna. The movement of the last of these divisions by the royal road, which winds through the Guadarama mountains, originated in an erroneous supposition that the route by Almeida was impracticable for artillery. The mistake was not discovered until it was too late to recall the order—and a very injurious delay was occasioned by the adoption of this circuitous line of march, which after experience proved to have been wholly unnecessary. On the 5th of November, Sir John Moore reached Atalia—on the 8th, he was at Almeida—and on the 11th, his advanced guard crossed the rivulet that divides Spain from Portugal, and entered Ciudad Rodrigo. At San Martin he slept in the house of the curé, occupying the same bed that had the former year been assigned to Junot and Loison on their respective marches; and on the 13th, he entered Salamanca.

Sir David Baird landed at Corunna on the 13th of October, bringing with him about 10,000 men. When this corps was added to the troops already on their march from Portugal, it was computed that the army under Sir John Moore would exceed 32,000 effective men. Never were British troops in higher spirits; in health, discipline, and equipment, no army could be superior; all were burning with desire to meet the enemy; and, confident in their leader and in themselves, Rolica and Vimiero rose in glorious recollection, and, in fancy, a braver field than either

* "Elvas derives its importance as a place of arms from Fort La Lippe. It stands upon the very summit of a steep and commanding eminence, and overhangs the left of the town; the military occupation of which is thus rendered totally impracticable, unless the fort shall have been previously reduced. It appeared to me to be a *chef-d'œuvre* in the science of fortification; and consists of five principal angles, or rather bastions, in tiers, one above another, which gradually recede towards the centre of the fort. From the highest of these you command a view of the whole country for many miles round, and they all communicate with one another—all, at least, which possess the same degree of elevation—by strongly-casemated passages. The fort is abundantly supplied with reservoirs for water; and furnaces for heating shot are erected in all the most convenient places. In a word, nothing appears to have been omitted which the knowledge of its founder could suggest as calculated to place it beyond the reach of insult."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative.*

was to be fought and won. That dream was quickly dissipated. The master spirit of the age was already in the field, and turning his overwhelming masses * against the only enemy worthy of his sword.

The occurrences of a few days were sufficient to convince Sir John Moore, that the position of his army, whether it advanced or remained inactive, was pregnant with danger; but as to the extent of his future embarrassments, he could have formed no adequate estimate. In every expectation, he was disappointed—every representation of the authorities proved false—he had no plan of operations laid down for his guidance—he had no partisans with whom he might cooperate—and the flattering statements respecting the resources and the spirit of the country, were grossly exaggerated, or utterly fallacious. He advanced to unite himself to armies; and when he reached the supposed point of junction, he received intelligence that they were destroyed. The people were the sole dependence that remained. “He found among the upper class of society, the timid, the interested, and the vain—some fearing to lose, others eager to gain, and a few, and those miserably qualified, ambitious to shine. He found the common people an ungovernable race of wilful men, now going forth to fight, and now dispersing to their homes, just as the caprice of the hour

* “He counted on his muster-rolls, above three hundred and thirty thousand men, and above sixty thousand horses. Above two hundred pieces of field artillery followed these corps to battle, and as many more remained in reserve. Of this monstrous army, two hundred and fifty-five thousand men, and fifty thousand horses, were actually under arms, with their different regiments; thirty-two thousand were detached or in garrisons, preserving tranquillity in the rear, and guarding the communications of the active force. The remainder were in hospital, and so slight had been the resistance of the Spanish armies, that only nineteen hundred prisoners were to be deducted from this multitude. Of the whole host, two hundred and thirteen thousand were native Frenchmen; the residue were Poles, Germans, and Italians.

“Of the disposable troops, thirty-five thousand men and five thousand horses were appropriated to Catalonia, and about the same number to the siege of Zaragoza. Above one hundred and eighty thousand men, and forty thousand horses, were therefore available for any enterprise, without taking a single man from the service of the lines of communication.”—*Napier*.

affected them. Avaricious dealers and contractors, meddling priests and petty authorities, full of ignorance and trickery, many of them double-faced intriguers, were not wanting. To control these discordant elements, there was not one leading or master mind in the whole kingdom, nor one powerful and acknowledged council to unite them wisely, either in fear or affection, to one end. Some were distracted by the duties of their callings, some by their treasure or their families."*

If any thing were wanting to increase the mortification occasioned by the exposure of the delusory encouragement the Spanish authorities had held out, it was, the disgusting ignorance with which the populace insisted upon an immediate advance upon Madrid. The men who had been the first to hurry from these inglorious fields on which the military power of Spain had been annihilated, were loudest in this senseless outcry against the English general; and the ill-suppressed murmurings of his own troops, evinced too plainly that the cautious system necessity had forced him to adopt, was any thing but congenial to their feelings and their expectations. That the situation of Sir John Moore was painful and perplexing, will be readily understood; and unfortunately, a spirit so sensitive as his, was not calculated to brook obloquy heaped upon him by worthless allies, on the one hand, and the open display of discontent, which measures not in unison with their wishes too frequently elicited from his soldiers, on the other.

Although deceived by specious promises of assistance which never were, and never could be realized, and grossly led astray by the representations of the British minister†—his only medium of communication with the Junta and authorities at Madrid—Sir John Moore felt convinced, from the moment he entered Salamanca, that a retreat in the end would be inevitable, and the safety of

* Sherer.

† Mr. Frere.

his army could only be secured by falling back upon Ciudad Rodrigo, and that too with the least possible delay. But no proceeding could be so unpopular with the army; the Spanish government deprecated a retreat; while Mr. Frere, representing the feelings of the people of Madrid to have exceeded in ardour and resolution the most sanguine expectations he could have formed, urged upon the English general, in the strongest terms, the necessity of supporting the Spanish cause, and fostering the spirit of resistance which had displayed itself, by every means entrusted to him for that purpose. Colonel Char-milly, the envoy of the British minister and a person in the confidence of the native government, corroborated these statements, and assured Sir John that a powerful reaction had already taken place—and added, that the advance of the English army was only wanted to confirm the people in their fixed resolution of resisting to the last. Swayed by these remonstrances, Moore, contrary to his better judgment, yielded an unwilling consent; and, while he should have been on the road to Portugal, in an evil hour he countermanded the order issued to Sir David Baird, and desired him to countermarch upon Astorga.

“Still the rooted feeling of his heart was despondency.” In the letter that conveyed the order to Sir David, after expressing his conviction that the spirit of resistance had arisen too late; “but,” he added, “we must be at hand to aid and take advantage of whatever happens. The wishes of our country and our duty demand this of us, with whatever risk it may be attended. I mean, however, to proceed, bridle in hand; for, if the bubble bursts and Madrid falls, we shall have a run for it.” These expressions showed too plainly how feeble were his hopes—and they were sadly prophetic of the disastrous consequences, which attended the adoption of operations his own judgment disapproved.

Sir John Hope had executed his long and fatiguing march in safety, and early in December arrived at Alba de

Tormes with his corps. Previous to the commencement of active operations, Sir John Moore wrote to the Marquess Romana, to induce him to act in concert, and ascertain the amount of the assistance he could render; but nothing could be less encouraging than the reply. The Marquess stated his actual strength in men at 20,000, but admitted that they were wretchedly equipped: "All were without havresacks, cartridge boxes, and shoes—and at least two-thirds without clothing from head to foot." He farther observed, that they were well-affected, in good spirits, and only required food and necessaries to render them effective. He assured Sir John that he was most anxious to join and act in concert with his army; but intimated that a French corps was extended from Sahagun to Almanza, and so long as they kept that position, he, of necessity, must remain where he was for the protection of the Asturias.

Although counting little upon the support he should acquire by a junction with Romana, Sir John determined, by a combined movement with Sir David Baird, to oblige the enemy to fall back upon Reynosa, and thus afford the Spaniards an opportunity of uniting their ill-appointed levies with the British troops. But the preparations for a retreat were still continued; magazines were formed at Benevente, Astorga,* Villa Franca, and Lugo. The road to Portugal was kept open for a sudden march—an arrangement which combined a double line of operations, and enabled Sir John to act with greater freedom and security.

On the 11th of December, the English army moved forward. Sir John Moore reached Alaejos on the 13th; Lord Paget was at Toro, with two brigades and the cavalry; General Hope was at Torrecilla; and General Stuart, with the hussars, occupied the villages on the

* "Astorga, the ancient Asturica Augusta, was formerly a place of great strength, and is surrounded by a wall, having every appearance of antiquity. Near to the city is the ruined castle of the Marquess de Astorga, a building of great extent, and apparently baronial importance. The cathedral is neither celebrated for its elegance nor magnitude, being in every respect very inferior to that of Leon."—*Leith Hay*.

banks of the Douro. Here the first hostile collision took place; and the first opportunity was afforded to the English cavalry of displaying the boldness and gallantry, for which throughout that disastrous campaign they were afterwards so honourably distinguished.

The little town of Rueda was occupied by the French; and as they were ignorant of the advance of the British, it was thought advisable to attempt a surprise.* This was most gallantly effected by a squadron of the 18th, led by General Stuart. Having entered the village, the British hussars attacked and overthrew the enemy: "The greater number were sabred on the spot, many were taken, and only a few escaped to inform General Franceschi, who occupied Valladolid, with a body of two or three thousand horse, that the British army had not retreated."†

On the 14th an incident occurred, which caused a sudden and decisive change in the arrangements made previously by Sir John Moore. Head-quarters were at Alaejon, where a despatch, found upon a French officer whom the peasantry had intercepted and put to death, was brought to the English general. Among other documents which it contained, a letter from Berthier to Soult was found. In this despatch instructions were given to that marshal to take possession of Leon, drive the Spaniards into Galicia, and seize on Benevente and Zamora. "He would," as the letter stated, "have no English to contend with, as they were already in full retreat." This intelligence led

* It is really unaccountable how badly informed each of the contending parties appear to have been, regarding the movements and situations of the other. Sir John Moore knew nothing of the proceedings of the Spanish armies, until he was informed that they were no longer in existence. The Emperor was equally in error; it was under a false impression of the British army having retired into Portugal, that Napoleon advanced upon Madrid. Had he been aware of the exact position of the British army, other objects might have first engrossed his attention. Of the movements of the English generals, strange as it may appear, Napoleon was in total ignorance until he had obtained possession of the capital.

† Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

Sir John Moore to believe that the Duke of Dalmatia was still unacquainted with the advanced movement of the British army—and, were this the case, it was possible that the French might be taken by surprise, and an important blow struck upon the banks of the Carrion, where Soult was lying with a corps of sixteen thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse, before the enemy was apprised that the English, instead of having commenced a retreat, were advancing from Salamanca.

The force under Moore's command was sufficiently strong to ensure a successful issue to the intended operation. It was also in hand; and to plan and to execute were, consequently, within the power of the English general. His infantry were concentrated at Mayorga, the cavalry at Melgar Abaxo—the entire amounting to twenty-three thousand six hundred men, with sixty pieces of cannon. The whole was organized in three divisions—a reserve, and two light brigades of infantry—and one division of cavalry. The guns were divided into seven brigades, of which four batteries were attached to the infantry, two to the cavalry, and one was held in reserve.

The Marquess Romana had promised to cooperate in the meditated attack upon the Duke of Dalmatia, by marching in two columns by Almazar and Guarda. Little assistance, however, could be calculated upon from him. Full of zeal in the cause, the infamy of the Asturian Junta and insubordination of the peasantry, paralyzed every effort he had used towards restoring the army to a state of comparative efficiency. If reproved for misconduct, his soldiers abandoned their standards in hundreds; and, indeed, that any should have joined them was the marvel. "Nothing could equal the profligate corruption of the Asturian authorities, who, without a blush, openly divided the English subsidies, and defrauded, not only the soldiers of their pay and equipments, but the miserable peasants of their hire."* No wonder, therefore, that the

* Napier.

Marquess Romana failed totally in establishing any force which could be serviceable as an auxiliary, or formidable as a foe.

In the mean time, Soult concentrated his corps upon the Carrion—and, alarmed at his own weakness, ordered the commandant of Burgos to change the route of such troops as should pass through that city, and send them direct to himself.

Nothing could surpass the boldness and gallantry displayed by the British cavalry during the period of the advance from Salamanca. With boundless confidence, and always with success, the English patrols sought out and charged enemy's pickets of very superior numbers. Many slight affairs, while they tended to create confidence in their own prowess, led to no important result; but an occasion presented itself, which produced an exploit honourable to all concerned.

On halting at Melgar Abaxo, it was reported to Lord Paget, that a corps of seven hundred cavalry were posted three leagues in his advance at some distance from the main body of the French army—and the English general determined to surprise and cut it off. Having made the necessary arrangements, on the morning of the 21st, Lord Paget set out from Melgar for Sahagun, which town had been occupied by Debelle's brigade. The English hussars marched in the middle of a cold dark night, in the hope of reaching the enemy's outposts unobserved, and thus surprising the French dragoons at day-break.

“When they had ridden about two-thirds of the way, Lord Paget divided his force, and desiring General Slade, with the 10th, to pursue the course of the Cea, and to enter the town by that side, he himself, followed by the 15th, wheeled off to approach it by a different route. It was not long before his lordship's party fell in with a picket of the enemy; and all, except one man, were either cut down or made prisoners. But the escape of one was as injurious, under existing circumstances, as the escape of

the whole ; for the alarm was given, and before the 15th could reach the place, the enemy were ready to receive them. It was now broad day-light, and as our troops drew near, the French were soon formed in what appeared to be an open plain, at no great distance from the town. The 15th were wheeled into line in a moment, and as there was no time to be lost, they followed their leader at a brisk trot, with the intention of charging ; but when they were yet fifty yards from the enemy, they found that a wide ditch divided them, and that the French had availed themselves of other inequalities in the ground, of which, when some way off, they had not been aware. A pause was now necessarily made, but one instant served to put the whole again in motion. The regiment, wheeling to its left, soon found a convenient spot for crossing, and although the enemy manœuvred actively to hinder the formation, they were in line, and advancing to the charge, within five minutes from the commencement of the check."* The French waited to receive the threatened attack, keeping up a discharge of carbines—but the English hussars came on boldly and at speed, and the enemy were charged with an impetuosity that proved irresistible. Their line was instantly broken through, and they retired in the greatest disorder. Many were killed upon the spot, many more unhorsed, and two chefs d'escadron and one hundred and fifty-seven men were made prisoners.

What rendered this affair additionally creditable to the English hussars, was the disparity, in point of numbers, between them and the enemy. The French cavalry amounted to fully seven hundred men, the English little exceeding four hundred.

The British army halted during the 21st and 22d of December, having outmarched their supplies. In the interim the French corps upon the Carrion was receiving, every hour, accessions to its strength, until, with its reinforcements, it numbered eight thousand men. Alarmed

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

lest his communications with Placentia should be endangered, Soult abandoned Saldanha on the 23d, a movement of which Sir John Moore remained in ignorance. All, however, in the British cantonments, gave note of preparation; hospitals were established in the convents, and every arrangement completed for the transport of the wounded to the rear.

Sir John's intention was to have moved during the night of the 23d,—reached Carrion at day-break—stormed the bridge—ascended the river—and attacked the main body of the French, which, as he supposed, were still in position at Saldanha. Evening came, the troops were under arms, the long-expected moment had at last arrived, the regiments were already on the march, and with the first blush of morning the contest would commence. Such were the expectations, such was the belief of all, when, at the instant, two couriers arrived, and the intelligence they brought extinguished every hope of victory, and gave a warning intimation of the distresses and disasters which ensued.

The French armies were marching in all directions,—one object influencing their movements, and that object was the annihilation of the English. The third corps had been halted at Vittoria, the fourth at Talavera, the eighth was marching to reinforce the second, and Napoleon, in person, was in the field to direct the combinations, by which the British army should be crushed, and their “hateful presence” removed for ever from the Peninsula.

Of the movements of the English general, Napoleon remained in ignorance until the 21st; and when it was clearly ascertained that Sir John Moore was actually advancing, the deadly hostility towards the British he had so often and so virulently expressed,* seemed additionally

* “The day,” said Buonaparte, in one of his despatches, “wherein we succeed in seeing these English, will be a day of Jubilee for the French army. Oh, that they may dye with their blood this continent which they have desolated with their intrigues, their monopolies, and their frightful selfishness! Oh, that they might be met with to the number of 80,000 or

increased by the intelligence. "In an instant the Spaniards, their juntas, and their armies, were dismissed from his thoughts; the different corps were arrested in their movements,—ten thousand men were left to control the capital,—and on the evening of the 22d fifty thousand men were at the foot of the Guadarama."* The weather had been intolerably cold, snow had fallen abundantly, the passes of the Sierra were choked, the route was reported to be impassable, and the artillery, which had preceded the column, gave up the attempt in despair, and commenced a descent of the mountain. At this moment Napoleon himself appeared; and, regardless that the report of the peasantry confirmed the opinion expressed by the general commanding the advanced guard, that the road was utterly impracticable, the Emperor, determined that no obstacle should stay his progress, exhibited one of those admirable traits of personal intrepidity and decision, for which his character was so remarkable. The hurricane had become more violent than ever, and hail and snow fell heavily, when, calling on his troops to follow him, he immediately proceeded to place himself at the head of the column. "Accompanied by the *chasseurs à cheval* of the guard, he passed through the ranks of the infantry, formed the chasseurs in close column, occupying the entire width of the road; then, dismounting from his horse, and directing the rear of the leading half squadron, the whole moved forward. The men, by being dismounted, were, with the exception of those immediately in front, more sheltered from the storm, while the dense mass trod down the snow, and left a beaten track for the infantry, who, no longer obstructed in the same degree, and inspired by the presence as well as the example of Napoleon, pushed forward, and the whole descended to Espinar."†

100,000 men, instead of 20,000! that English mothers might feel the evils of war, and the English government cease to sport with the lives and blood of the continental nations. All the evils, all the plagues which can afflict the human race, come from London."—*Despatch of Napoleon.*

* Napier.

† Leith Hay.

“The intelligence thus received was of the greatest importance. The march upon Carrion would undoubtedly have compromised the safety of the army. Not only the most probable, but the most to be desired result of that movement, namely, the defeat of Marshal Soult, would but have added to its dangers and difficulties. Had Marshal Soult retired when assailed by the British force, it is probable that its general, being in ignorance of the rapid movement making against him from the Escorial, would have advanced in pursuit; and this must have rendered his situation still more critical. In either case, the time lost could not fail to occasion the destruction or capture of the army.”*

The effect produced upon the English soldiery by the sudden and unexpected change in operations, which necessarily resulted from the information just received, can scarcely be imagined. Troops not an hour since filled with life, and hope, and confidence, appeared perfectly astounded at the order; all retired to their quarters in sullen silence, oppressed with gloomy anticipations, and, of course, conjecturing the worst.

The 23d passed in making preparations for a retreat. The heavy baggage and stores were moved to the rear without delay, while the light troops and cavalry remained at Sahagun, to mask the retreat, by showing their patrols frequently in front of the enemy's lines, and skirmishing with their pickets. On the 24th General Hope fell back on Mayorga, with two divisions, and General Baird, with a third, retired by the road of Valencia de San Juan, and secured the ferry across the Esla.

Never were hours of deeper importance to an army. Napoleon, night and day, was urging his troops forward. On the 24th he reached Villacastia, and on the 26th he arrived at Tordesillas. Bent on the destruction of the English, “his resolution, and the carrying into effect, was like light-

* Leith Hay.

ning; the flash was no sooner visible than the thunder rolled; the influence of his mighty genius was instantaneously felt; no delay was permitted to take place; the troops marched incessantly; and their great leader rushed on to retrieve the errors of his lieutenants."



CHAPTER XXVIII.

RETREAT COMMENCES—CAVALRY AFFAIR—MOORE'S ARRANGEMENTS—DESTROYS THE BRIDGE AT CASTRO GONZALO—HALT AT BENEVENTE—DISORDERLY CONDUCT OF THE ARMY—CAVALRY ACTION—THE BRITISH REACH ASTORGA—ROMANA'S ARMY—FRENCH MOVEMENTS—DESTRUCTION OF STORES—NAPOLEON ENTERS ASTORGA—HE IS RECALLED TO PARIS—SOULT ENTRUSTED WITH THE PURSUIT OF THE ENGLISH ARMY—PROSPECTS OF SIR JOHN MOORE—CHARACTER OF HIS RETREAT—ADVANTAGES OF RISKING A BATTLE—EFFECTS OF THE RETREAT BEHIND ASTORGA—MISERABLE CONDITION OF THE ENGLISH ARMY—DISORDERS AT BEMBIERE, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES—AFFAIR AT CACABELLOS—DEATH OF GENERAL COLBERT—RETREAT CONTINUED.

ON the evening of Christmas day, the last picket retired from the front of Sahagun, and the cavalry, under Lord Paget, followed the reserve and light brigades, which had marched four hours in their advance. Not a moment could now be lost, for Sir John Moore had anticipated Napoleon's movements only by twelve hours. The French Emperor reached Valderas, persuaded that the English army was cut off; but his mortification was unbounded when he found they had crossed the Esla, and thus, for the present, evaded his pursuit. Baird's division had passed on the 26th by the fords and ferry of Valencia; and Hope, with the light brigades and reserve, crossed by the bridge of Castro Gonlazo, the defence of the bridge at Mansilla having been entrusted to the Spaniards, under Romana.

The cavalry, however, were not suffered to retire so easily as the columns. As the rear guard were clearing Mayorga, Ney's videts were discovered by Lord Paget, and a strong body of French horsemen immediately displayed themselves, drawn up on a high ground that flanked the line of the English retreat. Colonel Leigh,

with two squadrons of the 10th hussars, was immediately directed to dislodge them. The order was gallantly obeyed. The soil was heavy, the ground saturated with rain, and when, under a smart fire, the English cavalry had gained in two lines the summit of the height, the exertion was so violent that it was found necessary to rein up, and allow the horses to get fresh wind. The halt was but momentary; and the word to charge was given. The attack was vigorously made; the enemy overthrown and driven from the heights, leaving on the ground a number of men, dead or dismounted, while upwards of one hundred prisoners were carried off by the English dragoons.

Lord Paget continued his regressive march to Benevente. Romana, leaving three thousand men and two guns to defend the bridge at Mansilla, fell back with the remainder of his corps to Leon; while Soult took the Mansilla road, directing his march upon Astorga, with which place, by the promptness of his movements, Sir John Moore had restored the communications which the rapidity of Napoleon's movements had endangered.

Benevente was too open and exposed to warrant the British general remaining a longer time in that town, than was required for the removal of the stores which had been there collected. Accordingly, Romana was requested to defend Leon as long as possible, leaving the road to Astorga open to the British, it being considerably shorter than the route by Benevente. To General Craufurd the duty of destroying the bridge at Castro Gonzalo was entrusted. Notwithstanding constant annoyance from the enemy's advanced guard, who had been in front of the position since the 26th, at midnight of the 28th the bridge was mined, and two arches having been destroyed, the connecting buttress was blown up by the explosion. The troops who had protected the workmen abandoned the heights previously occupied upon the left bank, and crossing the ruined arches on single planks, they gained the opposite side in safety; "an instance," Napier remarks, "of

singular good fortune, for the night was dark and tempestuous; the river, rising rapidly with a roaring noise, was threatening to burst over the planks,—and the enemy was close at hand.”*

At Benevente the army halted two days, to enable the stores to be removed; but from the want of means of transport there was no alternative left to Sir John Moore but to destroy the greater portion of his magazines. The misconduct of the troops, both here and at Valderas, had been so great, that a service order was issued by the English general, denouncing the licentiousness of the soldiery, and requiring that the strongest exertions of the officers should be used to repress drunkenness and plunder. Indeed the discontent, in every department of the army, was not concealed: an aversion to a retreat, and the additional annoyance occasioned by the severity of the weather, encouraged inebriety in the men, and, in many instances, a culpable indifference among the officers. Property was disregarded; the Spanish community exhibiting an apathy, on the one hand, to the sufferings of their allies, which engendered, on the other, a spirit of mischief and destruction. Buildings, venerable for their antiquity, were not protected from reckless devastation; and the same

* The following anecdote narrates a singular instance of personal intrepidity and uncommon presence of mind, by which a frightful catastrophe was averted. “Several thousand infantry slept in the long galleries of an immense convent, built round a square; the lower corridors were filled with the horses of the cavalry and artillery, so thickly stowed that it was scarcely possible for a single man to pass them, and there was but one entrance. Two officers returning from the bridge, being desirous to find shelter for their men, entered the convent, and with horror perceived that a large window shutter being on fire, and the flame spreading to the rafters above, in a few moments the straw under the horses would ignite, and six thousand men and animals would inevitably perish in the flames. One of the officers (Captain Lloyd, of the 43d,) a man of great activity, strength, and presence of mind, made a sign to his companions to keep silence, and springing on to the nearest horse, run along the backs of the others until he reached the flaming shutter, which he tore off its hinges, and cast out of the window; then, returning quietly, awakened some of the soldiers, and cleared the passage without creating any alarm, which, in such a case, would have been as destructive as the flames.”—*Napier*.

outrages which were committed by the soldiery of Monk and Hawley, in the palace of the Scottish kings, were repeated by the army of Sir John Moore, in the more splendid castle of Benevente.*

On the 28th, the divisions of Hope and Fraser marched by Labeneza; and on the following day, they were joined at Astorga by Baird's corps, which had moved from Valencia. The light division and the reserve evacuated Benevente the same day, while the cavalry still remained to observe the fords that crossed the Esla.

The French were on the alert; and Lefebvre Desnouettes, concluding that the pickets had been unsupported, crossed the river above the town, with six hundred of the Imperial guard, and for a short time pushed back the weak cavalry which first confronted him. The pickets however, supported by some German dragoons, acted with their customary boldness, riding fearlessly at the leading squadrons of the French, and holding them in check until Lord Paget with the 10th Hussars came to their assistance. Many charges were made on both sides, and the squadrons were repeatedly intermingled—but the appearance of the 10th was the signal for General Stewart and the pickets to renew the attack, and accordingly they cheered and charged

* "With Gothic grandeur it has the richness of Moorish decoration; open galleries, where Saracenic arches are supported by pillars of porphyry and granite; cloisters, with fountains playing in their courts; jasper columns and tessellated floors; niches, alcoves, and seats in the walls, over-arched in various forms, and enriched with every grotesque adornment of gold and silver, and colours which are hardly less gorgeous. It belonged to the Duke of Ossuna; and the splendour of old times was still continued there. The extent of this magnificent structure may be estimated from this circumstance, that two regiments, besides artillery, were quartered within its walls. They proved the most destructive enemies that had ever entered them: their indignant feelings broke out again in acts of wanton mischief, and the officers who felt and admired the beauties of this venerable pile, attempted in vain to save it from devastation. Every thing combustible was seized, fires were lighted against the fine walls, and pictures of unknown value, the works, perhaps, of the greatest Spanish masters, and of those other great painters who left so many of their finest productions in Spain, were heaped together as fuel."—*Southey*.

again. The horses, pressed to their speed, broke through the enemy's line, and forced it at the sabre's point across the river, with the loss of seventy prisoners, the French Colonel, Lefebvre, being included. Speaking of this action in which he bore a most distinguished part, Lord Londonderry says, "This was the most serious affair in which we had been yet engaged. The cavalry opposed to us, were all tried soldiers, and they fought in a manner not unworthy of the reputation which they had earned in the North of Europe." To add to the *éclat* of this brilliant encounter, Napoleon, it has been said, was actually a looker-on, and from the opposite heights, witnessed the discomfiture of his guards.

This spirited affair was not only most creditable to the English cavalry, but attended with good results, generally, to the army. The French dragoons, for many days after this rencontre, exhibited nothing of that audacity with which they had previously ridden up within pistol distance of the rear-guard; and the infantry reached Astorga with far less molestation than might have been otherwise expected.

Astorga afforded but sorry accommodation to the English troops, for it was preoccupied by Romana, who, contrary to previous arrangements, had abandoned Leon to the enemy, without the semblance of defence; and to retire his miserable and half-starved soldiers * to the valley of the Minho, he was obliged to cross the line of march of the British, and encumber the streets and houses of Astorga with a mere mob, suffering from nakedness and famine—without arms or ammunition—and afflicted with a pestilential disease. The appearance of this wretched army was sufficient to dishearten a soldiery, themselves in comparative disorder. "Of Romana's troops, those under arms little

* "Nothing could be more wretched than the appearance of the Spanish troops. Disease and starvation seemed to struggle for mastery in the annihilation of life; and some of the worn-out wretches, half-naked, stretched on the ground, and in the agonies of death, presented a picture of squalid and extenuated misery not to be described."—*Leith Hay*



exceeded in number the sick borne on cars and mules ; and as they passed along, emaciated and enfeebled by disease, the procession had more the appearance of an ambulatory hospital in need of an escort, than of an army to defend the country."*

While Napoleon was at Valderas, Ney had reached Villaton, and Lapisse had entered Toro. Soult expected to have cut off the English general at Astorga ; but the destruction of the bridge at Castro Gonzalo delayed his march for twenty-four hours, as the rising of the river had rendered the fords impassable. On the 30th of December, Bessiers passed the Esla, occupied Benevente, and pushed his advanced cavalry to La Beneza, while Franceschi, nearly unopposed, carried the bridge of Mansilla. Soult, on the 31st, entered Leon, and advanced his pickets to Puente d'Orvigo ; and Bessiers occupied La Beneza, and pushed his patrols to the Puente de Valembré.

On the 31st, General Craufurd was detached with the light brigades by Orense to Vigo, a proceeding by which the effective strength of Sir John Moore's army was seriously reduced ; and for which, in the opinions of many, no necessity existed. "Two reasons have been assigned for this division of force : first, that it was to lessen the difficulties of the commissariat ; and, secondly, to secure the left flank of the army. The first may be defended. There appears to have been no necessity for the second. If the left flank was insecure, it could only become so from lateral roads, by which the troops from Astorga might have turned the line of march of the retreating battalions ; but to separate from these, and proceed direct for the valley of the Minho, through a distant country, where no enemy had existence, was an extraordinary mode of securing the uninterrupted march of the army."†

From the time when the British army retreated from Astorga, the discontent of the troops increased ; and no pains were taken to conceal feelings which now seemed general.

* Jones.

† Leith Hay.

There, as they believed, a stand would have been made, a battle hazarded, and the chances of a fair field afforded to a force, whose discipline might have become deteriorated, but whose spirit and efficiency remained unbroken. The destruction of field equipage and entrenching tools, and the blowing up of spare ammunition waggons, were fearful signals, and not to be misunderstood. From that time, a sad change both in discipline and moral conduct, was observable. Strictly speaking, the former was at an end—the soldiery became generally irregular—insubordination every where appeared—and except when in the immediate presence of the enemy (and to the immortal credit of that army be it recorded, that on these occasions, every noble principle seemed re-animated), the retreating corps seemed rather a tumultuary rabble, hurrying from a disastrous field, than a British army, whose organization and appearance, a short month since, would have challenged a world to surpass it.

Napoleon entered Astorga on the 1st of January—and there eighty thousand men with two hundred pieces of cannon were united. The exertion by which this was accomplished, was indeed stupendous, and worthy the genius of the Emperor. Regardless of difficulties which the severity of weather, the almost impassable state of mountain routes, and long dark nights, presented, he had traversed two hundred miles of country within ten days, “and transported fifty thousand men from Madrid to Astorga, in a shorter time than a Spanish diligence would have taken to travel the same distance.”*

Although by a rapid retreat, the British army escaped the fatal consequences which must otherwise have ensued

* “The indefatigable activity of the Duke of Dalmatia greatly contributed to the success of the whole campaign; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that Soult and Napoleon, advancing from different bases, should have so combined their movements, that (after marching, the one above a hundred, and the other two hundred miles, through a hostile country) they effected their junction at a given point, and at a given hour, without failure.”—*Ibid.*

from the unequalled rapidity of the movements of the Emperor, it is now a matter of conjecture, whether to accidental circumstances, afterwards, its ultimate salvation may not be attributed. With both the ardent wish, and ample means to destroy an enemy whom he feared and hated, Napoleon would not have allowed any obstacle to interpose between him and his settled purpose. The quarry was still in sight, although the first swoop had been evaded; and until the death-blow was struck, he would have resorted to exertions which ordinary minds could not imagine, nor ordinary men achieve. To annihilate the English, was the object next his heart; and to determine and effect, with Napoleon, were synonymal. Fate, however, had otherwise decreed.

Before he entered Astorga, the Emperor was overtaken by a courier from Paris. He was indeed the bearer of heavy tidings. The intentions of Austria were no longer doubtful—her hostility to Napoleon was openly declared; and it was now quite certain, that, undismayed by past disasters, she was again about to appeal to the sword. “This was the most important despatch, either with reference to the existence of the powers of Europe, or his own personal views, that Napoleon ever received.”* From it may be dated every disaster that befel him; it saved Spain, divided his power, periled his invincibility, and by a combination of circumstances, occasioned losses, and produced misfortunes, that laid the foundation for the Russian war, and finally induced the Emperor Alexander to adopt the bold measure of singly taking the field against the man, whom, after Erfurth, he willingly would have conspired against, and to whom fear alone forbad him from declaring an open hostility.

The important intelligence he received, obliged Napoleon to hasten back to Paris, and confide to others the task he had himself intended to have executed. To the Duke of Dalmatia, a commander only second to himself, the pursuit

* *Twelfth May.*

and destruction of the English army was entrusted; and having ordered the Imperial guard to immediately recross the Pyrenees, he strengthened Soult's corps with three divisions of cavalry and the same number of infantry. Two of these, Loison's and Heudelet's, were not yet come up, but they were directed to make forced marches in the Marshal's rear; while Ney, with the greater portion of the sixth corps, was ordered to support him. Having completed these arrangements, the Emperor set out for Paris at his usual speed, while his able lieutenant hurried on to overtake his retiring adversary; and the vigour with which the Duke of Dalmatia commenced his pursuit, showed how zealously he had entered into the objects and feelings of his master.

The situation of Sir John Moore, although wonderfully relieved from the additional pressure, which the presence of the Emperor with the troops now ordered into France must have occasioned, was every hour becoming more unpromising. His chances of safety were confined to two events—either in being enabled to march rapidly to the coast, or to fight a battle that should so far cripple his pursuers, as might abate the ardour of the enemy, and enable the relics of the English army to embark at Vigo or Coruña unmolested. The first, could it have been effected without serious loss, was certainly the more judicious alternative. Could the army be placed on ship-board, the south of Spain, with ample resources, was open for its operations. There, it could have been transported within a week—there it would have had ample time to have been organized anew, and restored to its former efficiency, long before it could dread any annoyance from the enemy, from whom it was separated by a space of country which would require more than a month to traverse.

That the British army could not maintain itself much longer in Gallicia was evident to all, and therefore a retreat was unavoidable; but the manner in which that retreat should be conducted, was the question which embarrassed

the English general. Was the movement of the army to be urged forward with a ruinous rapidity; or, was it to be an operation, executed with the quickness which circumstances required, but never assuming the semblance of a rout? If Sir John Moore's sole motive was to reach the sea, and that he disregarded the fatal consequences which invariably attend upon a hurried retreat, no doubt, favoured by the difficulty of the country,* long nights, bad roads, and broken bridges, his object could be achieved. But did the necessity exist that required this precipitous retirement? That Soult would not press him to the uttermost, it was idle to expect; and that a vigorous pursuit would occasion an enormous loss to a retreating army was equally certain. To gain the coast with the least possible loss, was the precise point to which Sir John Moore's line of conduct was narrowed. This Soult would strain every effort to prevent. Hence, no alternative was left to the English general but to risk an action without delay—and by crippling his opponent, obtain that breathing time for his army, which was indispensable for the conduct of a safe and honourable retreat.

Behind him, the country was strong. Moore had many positions where he could have offered battle; and on more than one occasion, he might have even attacked the Duke of Dalmatia to advantage. In effecting what Napoleon termed the "glorious mission of destroying the English army, pursuing them to their point of embarkation, and

* "Westward of Astorga, two great ranges of mountains trend from north to south: Puerto del Rabanal, Cruz de Ferro, and Foncebadon, are those of the eastern branch; those of the western, are the Puerto del Cebrero, Puerto del Courel, and Puerto del Aguiar; they meet on the south with the Sierra de Sanabria, the Sierra de Cabrera, and the Montes Aquilianos. The tract which these mountains inclose, is called the Bierzo: from summit to summit, it is about sixteen leagues from north to south, and about fourteen from east to west. The whole waters of this amphitheatre have but one opening; they are collected into the river Sil, and pass, through a narrow gorge, into the Val de Orras, in Galicia. The centre is a plain of about four square leagues. There is scarcely in Europe a more lovely tract of country, certainly, nowhere a more defensible one."—*Southey*.

driving them into the sea," the marshal had merely to press them sufficiently, without bringing them to action, and cold, fatigue, and suffering, would do the work of ruin as surely as the sword. What it was Soult's interest to avoid, it was Moore's duty to force on. His army were burning for a conflict: and had one occurred, the issue of Coruña removed all doubt of what the result must have been. If the trial had been made earlier, of course, a heavy loss in killed and wounded must have been expected; but surely the expenditure of life upon a battle-field would have been in every way more honourable and more advantageous, than leaving hundreds to be sabred, as they issued in helpless intoxication from the wine cellars at Bembitre, or abandoning them, when over-marched, to perish on the wayside from cold, and hunger, and exhaustion. Remonstrances from the Marquess Romana,* himself the leader of a worn-out mob, and unable to offer the slightest cooperation, appear at first view to have been absurd, and unworthy of the English general's consideration. But what Romana advised, Moore had the means to execute. The issue should have been tried before the light brigades were unnecessarily detached from the main body† at Bonillas; and instead of waiting to be assailed on the very point of embarkation, the disorganized, but well-affected and per-

* "Romana visited the British commander, and represented to him the propriety of facing the enemy where they were, a point from whence they had always a secure retreat by the passes of Mazanal and Foncebadon—passes so strong that a small force might maintain them against any numbers. He represented to him also, that the park of artillery was at Ponferrada, where also the hospitals were established, and there were magazines of corn; that in Villafranca there were more than 2,000 sick, with hospital stores and depots of arms, and therefore it was of the utmost consequence to defend the Bierzo. But Sir John Moore replied, that he had determined upon retiring into Galicia, because his troops required rest."—*Southey*.

† "He still possessed nineteen thousand of all arms, good soldiers to fight and strong to march, yet by the disorders at Valderas and Astorga, much shaken in their discipline; for the general's exertions to restore order and regularity were by many officers slightly seconded, and by some with scandalous levity disregarded."—*Napier*.

fectly efficient brigades of the retiring army should have anticipated that trial of strength between the Esla and Betanzos, which, under every disadvantage, was forced upon them at Coruña. With an army, unpopular measures, in their consequences, prove generally to be impolitic ones. A zealous and powerful apologist* of Sir John Moore's conduct during this unfortunate campaign, admits the capability of his force, and its dissatisfaction at the manner in which it was hurried from the presence of an enemy, to whom in numerous skirmishes, and eventually in a "fair-fought" field, it proved itself so decidedly superior.

Never had a regressive movement more prompt and mischievous effects upon an army, than those occasioned by Sir John Moore's orders for the divisions to fall back behind Astorga. That place, in the imagination of the soldiery, was the utmost point to which a retreat would be continued—of this they had been assured at Benevente; but the destruction of magazines, the wasting of ammunition, and the rapidity with which they were incessantly hurried forward, ended the delusion which had hitherto inspired them—and "it was too manifest that they were not retreating, but flying, before the enemy." The detaching of the light brigade confirmed their fears; for surely if any chance existed that a conflict with the enemy might occur, it was not likely that a commander would dispose of the *élite* of his battalions, where in every probability they must remain non-combatant. This reasoning had its effect; men remarkable for obedience to their officers, and the alacrity with which every order was executed up to this unhappy period, at once forgot their previous character, and became irregular, riotous, and insubordinate. "Discipline had vanished; their attachment to their general was gone; their respect shaken. The length of the marches, the severity of the weather, and the wretched state of the roads—here mud, there snow,"—the want of supplies, and

* Napier.

above all, the dispiriting effect of a retreat; all had united to depress their hopes, and produce a reckless and dangerous indifference, which rendered them dead to moral feelings, careless of the censure of superiors, and fearless of the shame and punishment always attached to crime.

It is painful, even at this remote period, to look back upon that ruinous retreat, and observe the calamitous consequences a mere "diversion," without any action beyond some cavalry collisions, had so immediately produced. On the 25th, the rear-guard retired from Sahagun unmolested, and in the highest discipline; and in one week, an eye-witness, after describing "the condition of the army as most melancholy," thus continues his fearful narrative:—"The rain came down upon us in torrents; men and horses were foundering at every step; the former fairly worn out through fatigue and want of nutriment, the latter sinking under their loads, and dying upon the spot. Nor was it only among the baggage animals that an absolute inability to proceed further began to show itself; the shoes of the cavalry horses dropped off, and the horses themselves soon became useless. It was a sad spectacle to behold these fine creatures urged and goaded on till their strength utterly failed them, and then shot to death by their riders, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Then, again, the few ammunition waggons which had hitherto kept up, fell one by one to the rear; the ammunition was immediately destroyed, and the waggons abandoned. Thus were misfortunes accumulating upon us as we proceeded; and it appeared extremely improbable, should our present system of forced marches be persisted in, that one-half of the army would ever reach the coast."*

At Bembibre, the demoralized state of the British army was painfully and fatally exhibited. For some days, and on the slightest pretexts, the soldiers quitted their ranks; and when a wine-store, or village provided with drinking-

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

houses fell within the line of march, whole companies deserted their colours, and in sheer despair, men, hitherto distinguished for sobriety, joined their more dissolute companions, and, in many cases, surpassed them in drunkenness and brutality. The army, marching by divisions, of course occasioned the main body to be always one march a-head of the reserve and rear-guard. When the latter arrived at Bembibre, the wine-vaults, houses, and streets, were filled with stragglers from the division who had but recently quitted the town, intermingled with muleteers and women, and all the nondescript followers who attend the movements of an army—the whole presenting a revolting picture of intoxication, in all its disgusting varieties. Some were stretched upon the ground, in a state of brutal insensibility; others staggered through the streets, exhibiting the foolery which inebriety occasionally brings on. More, on whom wine had a maddening effect, with the wish but not the power of being mischievous, threatened death to all who endeavoured by persuasion or assistance to induce them to quit the place. Every moment, now, was precious. The French dragoons hung closely on the heels of the reserve; and, during the last two days, the leading sections of the hostile cavalry rode for miles in the presence of those who covered the retreat; and not unfrequently, pressed the rearmost files so hard, that pistol-shots were interchanged. Thus circumstanced, delay were ruin, and the rear-guard reluctantly evacuated the town, leaving a small cavalry detachment to assist such of the unfortunates as might still attempt to get away. But the sudden appearance of a strong body of dragoons obliged it to retire in haste, and leave the drunkards to their fate. In a few minutes the French cavalry galloped in. The alarm roused those helpless wretches to a sense of danger, and they endeavoured to overtake their comrades when it was too late. They crowded tumultuously along the road, shrieking or swearing, as fear or ferocity prevailed; some threw their muskets away—others retained arms which

they could not use. The cavalry were now in the very throng of the wretched rabble, and, heedless as to age or sex, they cut down all whom they could reach, or trod beneath their horses' feet those who from terror or inebriety were stretched upon the road. Never did crime produce its own punishment more rapidly; numbers were killed outright; and of those who managed to escape, the gashed faces and maimed limbs they presented to their comrades, told that the French horsemen had used the sword with a reckless and unsparing severity.*

The reserve halted at Cacabellos, while the main body occupied the town of Villa Franca. Here, similar excesses were committed, and a disgusting repetition of drunken disorder and predatory outrages took place; a severe example was resorted to by Sir John Moore, and a soldier, detected in the act of plundering a magazine, was shot in the market-place. But death had no terrors for desperate men; plunder and drunkenness continued, for the licentiousness of the army was irrepressible.

Since the cavalry affair upon the 28th, no serious attempt had been made upon the rear-guard. On the 3d, however, a strong body of dragoons rode cautiously towards a height in front of Cacabellos, overlooking the Bembibre and Foncevedon roads, and which was occupied by a detachment of English cavalry, and four hundred of the 95th. The riflemen had already been ordered to retire, and were in

* A few were got away, but many were so tired and lame from sore feet, that they did not care if the French sabres and bayonets were at their breast, so completely did most of them give themselves up to despair. The rear-guard was at length forced to retire and leave these unfortunate people to their fate. Some of these poor fellows who had thought better of it, and were endeavouring to overtake their countrymen, were unmercifully sabred by the French cavalry, many of them in a defenceless state.

"One of the handsomest men in the grenadier company, of the name of M'Gee, was coming along the road, lame from an accident, his firelock and pack having been taken by his messmates to enable him to keep up; he was, however, overtaken by two French dragoons, and, although unarmed and helpless, was inhumanly cut to pieces almost within sight."—*Cadell*.

the act of crossing the bridge across the Guia, when Soult desired General Colbert to charge the British cavalry, and they, ignorant of the force to which they were opposed, retreated rapidly to Cacabellos. In consequence, the whole were intermingled on the bridge—while profiting by the confusion, the French general passed the river, and charged at speed through the village, making a few prisoners from the rear companies of the riflemen. But the 95th immediately recovering from their first surprise, retired slowly up the hill behind the village, and occupied some vineyards which immediately commanded the road. Colbert, with more gallantry than discretion, attempted to dislodge them, and charged at the head of his dragoons. The 95th waited coolly until the French cavalry were close to the enclosures in which they had taken post, and then opened a deadly and rapid fusilade. The leading squadron, file after file, dropped from their horses; for scarcely a shot was thrown away—and the French leader, whose daring gallantry had elicited the admiration of the British, fell dead while encouraging his men,* and the cavalry were driven back. Some voltigeurs crossed the river to their support—while part of the 52d hastened to assist the English riflemen, and a sharp skirmish commenced and continued until night closed the contest. Both sides suffered a considerable loss; and when darkness concealed the movements of the English, the retreat was quietly resumed, and the position abandoned, the rifle pickets covering the night-march of the columns.

The country from Villa Franca to Lugo is rugged and irregular, interrupted in many places by ravines, and thickly studded with vineyards and plantations of mulberry trees, which occasion the surface to be so much broken,

* Colbert was so remarkable for his personal symmetry, that Canova termed him "the modern Antinous." He was an excellent officer; and when he fell by a rifle-ball, which perforated his temple, the 95th testified their admiration of a gallant enemy by an expression of loud regret. What tribute to bravery equals that offered by an enemy in the heat and excitement of a battle!

that horsemen cannot act, and hence become rather an encumbrance than an advantage to an army. Sir John Moore, consequently, ordered the cavalry to march on without delay, and followed with the columns and artillery. The march was slowly and painfully effected—the distance being forty miles, nearly two days and a night were consumed in its accomplishment. It was more than a worn-down army could support; and a sadder scene never met the eye, than that which the road to Lugo presented. Still one lingering hope sustained the sinking soldier. It was the last dispiriting trial—the pursuers were to be boldly confronted—and at Lugo, the long-desired conflict would take place. Cheered by the expectation that death or victory would terminate sufferings no longer to be endured, many a feeble wretch staggered forward with his hardier comrades—and on the evening of the 5th, the exhausted battalions terminated a march, which, for severity and suffering, stands almost in the annals of warfare without a parallel.



CHAPTER XXIX.

RETREAT CONTINUED—DESTRUCTION OF STORES AND TREASURE—PLACE OF EMBARKATION CHOSEN—ACCIDENT TO FRASER'S DIVISION—SUFFERINGS OF THE SOLDIERS—FAILURE IN BLOWING UP THE BRIDGES—AFFAIR AT CONSTANTINO—HALT AT LUGO—ENGLISH ARMY FORM IN ORDER OF BATTLE—ITS EFFECT UPON THE SOLDIERY—SOULT MANŒUVRES—ATTACK MADE, AND REPULSED—SOULT DECLINES A SECOND TRIAL, AND MOORE CONTINUES HIS RETREAT UPON BETANZOS—HALT THERE—ARMY REACHES CORUÑA—ENGLISH AND FRENCH POSITIONS—MAGAZINE EXPLODED—FLEET ARRIVE, AND EMBARKATION COMMENCES—BATTLE OF CORUÑA—BAIRD AND MOORE WOUNDED.

THE retreat from Villa Franca to Lugo was marked by every casualty and annoyance, to which an army in imminent danger could be exposed. It was one continued skirmish between the French advanced, and British rear-guards—while the troops became hourly more unfit for service, and their resources diminished every mile. On the road, an immense supply of arms and clothing, intended for the use of Romana's army, was met. The soldiers were permitted to take any necessaries they pleased, and the rest were wasted or abandoned. Waggon's filled with sick and wounded men blocked the way, and, from a sad necessity, some were committed to the mercy of the enemy; several guns, whose horses had foundered, were spiked and left behind; until, at last, it was determined that the money intended for the immediate demands of the army should not be carried farther, and Sir John Moore directed that two bullock carts, loaded with one hundred thousand Spanish dollars, should be destroyed by rolling the casks which contained the specie into a deep ravine. The order was unnecessarily but strictly carried into execution: "the

rear-guard halted; and Lieutenant Bennet, of the light company of the 28th regiment, was placed over the money, with strict orders from Sir John Moore to shoot the first person who attempted to touch it. It was then rolled down the precipice, the casks were soon broken by the rugged rocks, and the dollars falling out, rolled over the height a sparkling cascade of silver. The French advanced guard coming up shortly after to the spot, were detained for a time picking up a few dollars that had been scattered on the road."*

"This was a most unwise as well as useless measure; had it been distributed among the soldiers, there is little doubt that they would have contrived to carry it along; whereas, the knowledge that it lay among the cliffs tempted many men to lag behind, who all fell into the hands of the enemy, or perished from cold. But everything was now done as if our case was absolutely desperate,† and as if the utmost that could be expected, or even desired, was to escape with our persons, at the expense of the whole of our material."‡

It appears a very strange circumstance, and one difficult to justify, that the English general had not decided upon the place from which he should embark his army, until his rear-guard had reached Herrierias, on the morning of the 5th, and then Coruña was selected, it being nearer than Vigo by two marches, and affording a tolerable position, on which a hard pressed army might abide an action. Whatever the causes might have been that prevented Sir John from coming to an earlier determination,

* Cadell.

† "An officer had charge of the cars that drew this treasure: in passing a village, a lieutenant of the 4th regiment observing that the bullocks were exhausted, took the pains to point out where fresh and strong animals were to be found, and advised that the tired ones should be exchanged for others more vigorous, which were close at hand: but the escorting officer, either ignorant of, or indifferent to his duty, took no notice of this recommendation, and continued his march with the exhausted cattle."—*Napier*.

‡ Lord Londonderry's Narrative

his indecision was attended with a serious misfortune to one of his divisions, which was the more to be regretted, because no circumstances required it. Having ordered the shipping to proceed from Vigo to Coruña without delay, an officer was sent forward to halt the leading division at Lugo, and overtake the light brigades, if possible, although they were already far advanced, by Orense, upon their rout to Vigo. "These orders were carried to Sir David Baird by one of the aides-de-camp of the Commander-in-chief, but Sir David forwarded them by a private dragoon, who got drunk and lost the despatch. This blameable irregularity was ruinous to General Fraser's troops; in lieu of resting two days at Lugo, that general unwittingly pursued his toilsome journey towards St. Jago de Compostella, and then returned without food or rest, losing by this pilgrimage above four hundred stragglers."*

To an army reduced in strength and spirits like Sir John Moore's, the slightest exertion beyond what was absolutely necessary for its deliverance, was to be avoided; and therefore the harassing march inflicted on Fraser's division was, indeed, a calamitous mistake.† Deep as the sufferings had been of the British army hitherto, it had not yet reached that climax of misery at which it was destined to arrive. The mountain road was strewn with worn-out soldiers, all anxious to struggle forward, but utterly unequal, from exhaustion and fatigue, to make any farther exertion to follow the receding columns still within their view, but on whom these deserted wretches were conscious that they "looked their last." The line of march for miles might be traced by the saddest indications of human suffering. An officer, in describing this melancholy scene, says, that on turning round, during the ascent of

* Napier.

† "Many of the horses attached to this division dropped down dead in the streets; many more were destroyed as useless; and even of the men, more than one were known to have perished of absolute exhaustion."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

the mountain, he observed "the rear of the army winding along the narrow road, their way marked by the wretched people, who lay on all sides, expiring from fatigue and the severity of the weather, and their bodies reddening in spots the white surface of the ground." No relief could be afforded, no succour, even from the pity of an enemy, could be hoped for. Where they fell, there these unfortunates expired, some in the sullenness of despair, or in that insensibility which death from cold produces; while others vented their rage in imprecations upon all connected with this calamitous expedition, and "died with curses on their lips."*

The accidental advantages which at times have enabled a retiring army to outstrip pursuit, appears to have been denied to the ill-fated soldiery of Moore. The road by which they marched, ran over a difficult and rugged surface, intersected by mountain-torrents, and occasionally carried across sudden and precipitous ravines. These natural advantages seem to have profited the retreating columns little—and attempts made to destroy the bridges, delay the enemy, and obtain a momentary respite for the wearied troops, proved invariably unsuccessful, either from the ignorance of those to whom the work of destruction had

* "The soldiers who threw themselves down to perish by the way-side, gave utterance to far different feelings with their dying breath; shame and strong anger were their last sentiments; and their groans were mingled with imprecations upon the Spaniards, by whom they fancied themselves betrayed, and upon the generals, who chose rather to let them die like beasts, than take their chance in the field of battle. That no horror might be wanting, women and children accompanied this wretched army—some were frozen to death in the baggage-waggons, which were broken down, or left upon the road for want of cattle; some died of fatigue and cold, while their infants were pulling at the exhausted breast. One woman was taken in labour upon the mountain; she lay down at the turning of an angle, rather more sheltered than the rest of the way from the icy sleet which drifted along; there she was found dead, and two babes which she had brought forth, struggling in the snow. A blanket was thrown over her, to cover her from sight, the only burial which could be afforded; and the infants were given in charge to a woman who came up in one of the bullock-carts, to take their chance for surviving through such a journey."—*Southey*.

been entrusted, or the hurried and imperfect means employed in executing the task.

From the summit of Monte de Cebrero to Lugo is a distance of fully ten leagues. "There are several bridges upon the way over glens and gills, which might have impeded the pursuit, had they been destroyed. One in particular, between Nogales and Marillas, is the most remarkable work of art between Coruña and Madrid. This bridge, which is called Puente del Corzul, crosses a deep ravine; from its exceeding height, the narrowness of its lofty arches, and its form, which, as usual with the Spanish bridges, is straight, it might at little distance be mistaken for an aqueduct. Several of those officers who knew the road, relied much upon the strength of the ravine, and the impossibility that the French could bring their guns over, if the bridge were destroyed. Grievous as it was to think of destroying so grand a work, its destruction was attempted; but, as in most other instances, to no purpose, whether the pioneers performed their office too hastily, or because their implements had been abandoned upon the way."*

On reaching the small hamlet of Constantino,† the rear guard was so closely followed, that Sir John Moore, to secure the passage of the bridge, was obliged to occupy a hill that domineered it at pistol shot, by posting there the 95th, and horse artillery. The bold front exhibited by these troops, induced the advanced guard of the enemy to

* "To inexperience, rather than any want of zeal, the failure of the pioneers may be ascribed. This was strongly and fatally proven, in blowing up the bridge at Cambria, on the river Mero. In his anxiety to effectually destroy the arch, which had been heavily mined, the officer of engineers exposed himself too much, and was killed by the explosion."—*Southey*.

† "The village of Constantino stands upon the edge of a small stream, which runs along a deep and rocky channel, forming the bottom of a ravine, which on either hand is closed by hills. The hill on the left of the village is ascended from the south, by an exposed and winding road, tolerably steep and uneven; whilst on the opposite side, is a long gradual slope reaching to the head of the bridge."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

believe that a decided stand, rather than a covering movement was intended, and accordingly they halted to allow their supporting brigades to come up. In the mean time, the column having effected the passage of the river, drew up in order of battle, and the light troops and artillery were directed to fall back. This movement was beautifully executed, the horse artillery retiring at a trot, and the 95th, with that celerity which equally distinguished their advances and retreats. Too late, the French discovered their mistake, and came pouring down the heights, as the last company of the rifle corps had safely crossed the bridge.

“Arrangements were instantly made to receive the attack, which seemed now to be threatened. The 28th and rifle corps formed so as to defend the bridge; whilst the 20th, 52d, and 91st, under Sir John Moore in person, assumed a position on the summit of a hill in the rear. Here, likewise, the horse artillery took post; and now all was expectation and anxiety. The enemy came on with great apparent boldness. His cavalry and tirailleurs attempted to pass the bridge; they were met, not only by the fire of the riflemen, but by a heavy and well-directed cannonade from the high grounds, and they fell back. In a few moments they renewed their efforts on the same point, and with similar want of success; and again, after a short pause, for the third time. But they were beaten back in every attempt; till at last darkness put an end to the skirmish, and they withdrew. At eleven o'clock at night, however, our people abandoned their post. The troops were dreadfully harassed by their exertions, but not a man sank under them; and before morning they reached Lugo, where they found the whole army concentrated.” *

Here the three battalions which Sir David Baird had left behind him, when he advanced to Astorga, effected their junction with Sir John Moore, and by this timely reinforcement, compensated in a great degree for the losses sustained in the progress of the retreat. Here also the English

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

commander had determined to offer battle—and as the enemy was superior in numbers,* none doubted that the challenge would be accepted. Immediate preparations were consequently made—and the hour of trial so long and so anxiously desired by the British army, it was confidently believed had arrived at last.

The position on which Sir John Moore intended to receive the French attack, was in advance of the town, and from its flanks being well protected by rocks and ravines, it was tolerably strong. The reserve accordingly bivouacked upon this ground, while the remainder of the troops sheltered themselves as they best could in Lugo, and some scattered cottages in the immediate vicinity of the town.†

Early on the 7th, the French cavalry appeared in force, moving to the right of the position they had taken, and the English divisions formed in order of battle. “As by magic, the organisation of his disorderly battalions was again complete. Neither severity of rebuke, nor even the example of a summary execution, had hitherto availed to check the wide and fearful insubordination: but when it

* Soult, from the best authority, had with him seventeen thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and fifty guns. Moore's effective force was estimated at sixteen thousand infantry, eighteen hundred cavalry, and forty pieces of cannon.

† In describing the confusion that reigned around, Leith Hay gives the following graphic sketch of Lugo at night-fall.—“There might be seen the conductors of baggage toiling through the streets—their laden mules almost sinking under the weight of ill-arranged burdens swinging from side to side; while the persons, in whose charge they had followed the divisions, appeared undecided which to execrate most, the roads, the mules, the Spaniards, or the weather. These were succeeded by the dull, heavy sound of the passing artillery; then came the Spanish fugitives from the desolating line of the armies. Detachments with sick or lamed horses scrambled through the mud, while, at intervals, the report of a horse-pistol, knelled the termination to the sufferings of an animal that a few days previously, full of life and high in blood, had borne its rider not against, but over the ranks of Gallic chivalry. The effect of this scene was rendered more striking, by the distant report of cannon and musketry, and more gloomy by torrents of rain, and a degree of cold worthy of a Polish winter.”

was known that the colours of their regiments were planted in bivouac on a line of battle, to the joy and the pride of their officers, the men came hurrying to the ranks; and, as they examined their locks, fixed their flints, and loosened in the scabbards those bayonets which the pouring rain had rusted fast in the sheaths, they again looked to their officers with the regard of a ready obedience and a brave devotion."*

It was noon before Soult appeared in person, or the greater portion of his infantry had come up; and the straggling order of their march showed that they had felt the severity of the rapid movements which enabled them to keep pace with the divisions they pursued. Unable to ascertain whether the whole army, or the rear-guard only was in his front, the French Marshal opened a cannonade upon the British centre, which was speedily silenced by the superior fire of the British guns. A long pause ensued—each waiting for his opponent, and neither appearing desirous to make the opening movement. At last a cloud of tirailleurs commenced skirmishing with the English pickets, infantry were seen defiling towards the left, and presently, in close column, they boldly mounted the heights in front, driving the light troops in, and obliging a wing of the 76th posted on the ridge, to fall back upon the 51st regiment, which was stationed a little in the rear. Sir John Moore having come forward, believing that his weakest point was about to be seriously assailed, rallied the light troops and led them on in person. A close discharge of musketry was followed by a spirited charge, and the French column was completely broken and driven down the hill, after sustaining a loss of more than three hundred of its number.

At dawn of day on the 8th, both armies were under arms. Every preparation for a battle had been completed, and the hopes and spirits of the men had reached the utmost point

* Sherer.

of expectation.* Hours wore away, but no hostile movements told that the storm of war was about to burst. The French continued quiet in their bivouacs—"darkness fell without a shot having been fired, and with it fell the English general's hope to engage his enemy on equal terms."†

It was now apparent to the most inexperienced soldier, that no good results could arise from remaining longer in position—and that Soult perfectly comprehended the object of his adversary, and would take especial care that no action should be forced upon him, but under ruinous disadvantages to the attacking army. No alternative was left Sir John Moore but to continue his retreat—and he determined, therefore, by a powerful exertion, to fall back upon Betanzos.

A night march consequently ensued, after huts had been raised, fires lighted, and every means adopted to conceal the abandonment of the position from the enemy. A temporary halt at Valenuda produced no respite to the divisions already so dreadfully over-marched,—for constant alarms obliged the regiments as frequently to fall in,—and the soldiery, with abated strength and spirits, continued the retreat at sunset.

That night, similar scenes of insubordination and distress to those described already, marked this exhausting move-

* "The prospect of a battle had restored to the army the whole of its confidence, and much of its discipline; and the general saw it was only by beating his pursuers, and beating them effectually, that he could hope to free himself from their presence, or secure a safe and orderly embarkation."—*Lord Londonderry's Narrative*.

† "The chief reason assigned for not attacking the enemy was, that the commissariat had only provisions for two days: delay, therefore, was judged as disadvantageous as retreat. It was afterwards known that the French expected to be attacked, that they had no confidence in the strength of their position, and that their ablest officers apprehended their advanced guard would have been cut off. They frequently spoke of this to those English who were left in their power at Lugo, and exulted that Sir John Moore had contented himself with offering battle, instead of forcing them to an engagement."—*Ibid*.

ment. Whole companies disappeared; and on reaching Betanzos "so many were found to have fallen behind, not only from the leading divisions, but from the reserve itself, that to have pursued our progress on the following morning, would have been to sacrifice a large portion of the army, and the 10th was accordingly given as a day of rest."*

The halt had its desired effect. The stragglers were enabled to join their battalions—and, as the enemy only appeared at evening, and shewed a cavalry force unsupported by infantry, the wandering soldiers united when hard pressed, rallied under some non-commissioned officers, and repulsing the French dragoons, rejoined their corps in safety. The retreat was now continued with little interruption from the enemy. "Battalions that, on the morning of the 10th, entered Betanzos reduced to skeletons, marched from thence on the 11th, strong and effective"—and the column, comprising the whole of the infantry, as it descended towards Coruña, favoured by a fine day, and a short and orderly march, would never have been recognised as the disorderly and wretched-looking multitude, which had cumbered the line of march from Lugo to Betanzos.

Coruña was gained—but no vessels appeared in the harbour—and no means to remove the army were in hand. The indecision of Sir John Moore regarding the point from which he should embark his troops, had embarrassed the English admiral; and contrary winds prevented the transports from coming round. Then, indeed, lost opportunities were regretted; all lamented "that a battle had not been fought long ago,—for it was quite manifest, that to embark without fighting was entirely out of the question"—and positions had been abandoned, in every respect preferable to any that the English general could now command.

Early on the 12th the battle ground was selected. Around the village of Elvina, a mile and a half distance

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

from the town, a semicircle of swelling heights arises. Farther advanced, the ground is much bolder, and consequently more defensible; but though a stronger position could have been obtained upon these heights, a much greater force than Moore could have employed, would have been required for its occupation.

The French in the meantime had been gradually drawing up, and on the 12th they appeared in force in front of El Bungo. That bridge had been effectually destroyed, and two days were consumed by the Duke of Dalmatia in rendering it practicable for his guns. On the 14th the French engineers repaired the broken arch, and enabled Soult, under a heavy cannonade, to pass three divisions across the Mero. On the 15th, Laborde having joined the Marshal, a position was taken by the French on the greater ridge, their right leaning on the point where the roads from Betanzos and St. Jago intersect each other, and their left upon a rocky eminence that domineered both lines. Here, during the night, a strong battery was erected and armed with eleven weighty guns; and here Mermet's division was drawn up, having Merle's in the centre, and Laborde's on the right. In front of the latter were the villages of Palavia and Portosa, while a wood covered the centre. The distance from the French left, to the opposite extremity of the English line, was something more than half a mile, the village of Elvina being midway between the two positions, and occupied by the British pickets.

The position of Sir John Moore was on the lower range of hills. Upon the left Hope's division was posted on a ridge that overlooked the Betanzos road, and inclined in the rear towards the village of Elvina. Baird's division took up the line covering the hills, which still continued to bend inwards, and extending to a valley, which separated this ridge from one that rose abruptly beyond the Vigo road. This valley was occupied by the rifle corps in extended order, supported by Fraser's division, which were posted on a height directly in front of the entrance

to Coruña, from whence that general could observe the coast road, and advance to any point on which his assistance might be required. The reserve was in the rear of the centre, close to the village of Airis, while a brigade, in column, detached from the right division, was placed in the rear of the British right—and another held several commanding points behind the left of the line, on which Hope's division was posted. While the French remained beyond the Mero all was tolerably quiet,—Soult labouring to restore the bridge, and Moore in active preparation for a battle, an event now considered as inevitable. This unusual tranquillity was suddenly and awfully interrupted.

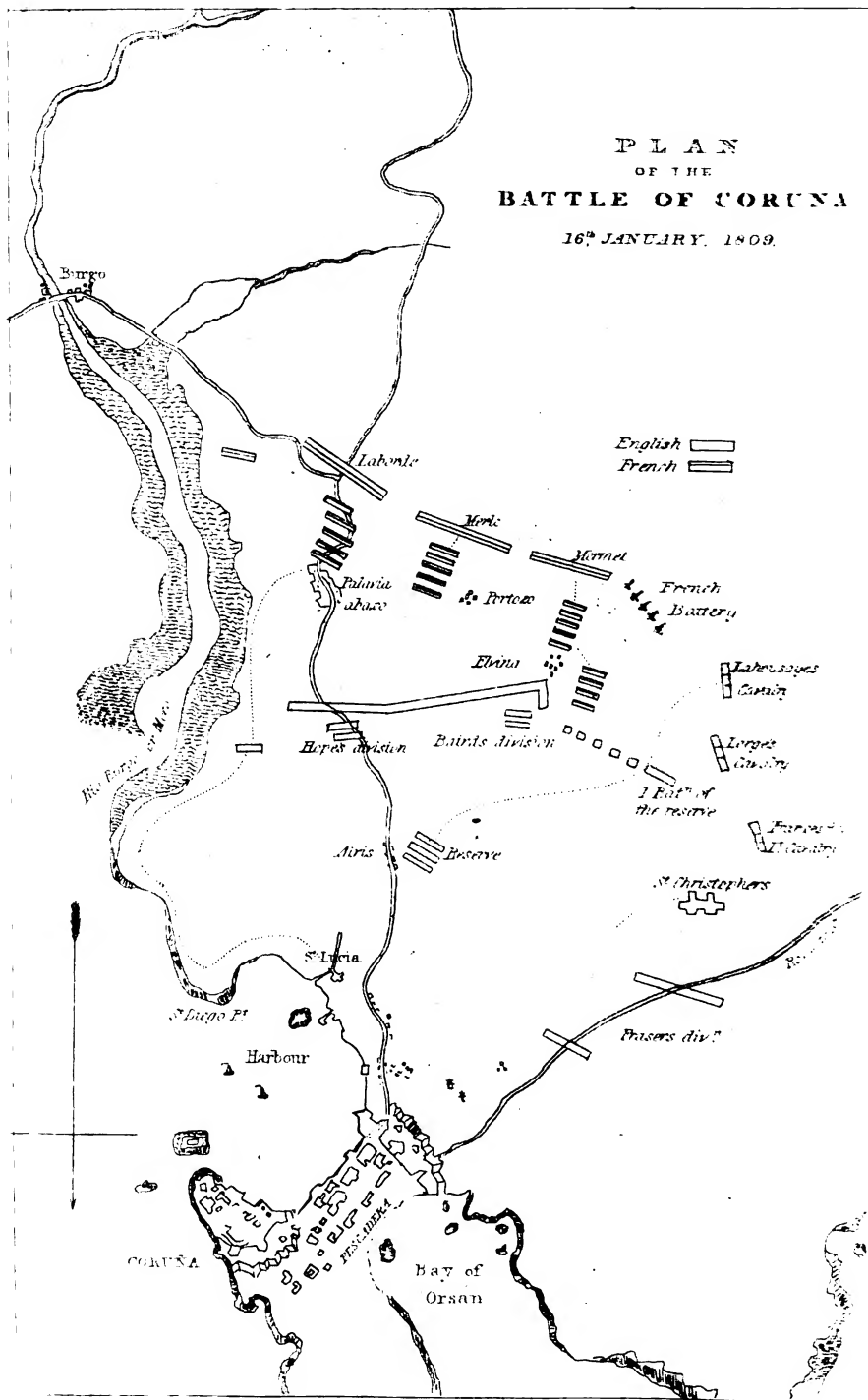
On the morning of the 13th, the buildings intended to supply the Spanish armies with powder were ordered to be destroyed. They were fortunately situated fully three miles from Coruña, and as the greater magazine contained 4000 barrels, when fired, the explosion was perfectly astounding. "It is impossible to describe the effect. The unexpected and tremendous crash seemed, for the moment, to have deprived every person of reason and recollection; the soldiers flew to their arms; nor was it until a massive column of smoke, ascending from the heights in front, marked from whence the astounding shock proceeded, that reason resumed its sway. It is impossible ever to forget the sublime appearance of the dark dense cloud of smoke that ascended, shooting up gradually, like a gigantic tower, into the clear blue sky. It appeared fettered in one enormous mass; nor did a particle of dust or vapour, obscuring its form, seem to escape as it rolled upwards in majestic circles."*

On the evening of the 14th the long-expected fleet appeared, and the embarkation of the sick and wounded, with the women and children, commenced and continued throughout the night. On the next day, all the artillery but twelve pieces, were safely shipped, a few of the best horses were removed, and the remainder destroyed, to prevent them

• Leith Hay.

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF CORUNA

16th JANUARY, 1809.



London: A. H. Baily & Co. 83, Cornhill.

from falling into the hands of the enemy. The cavalry, after the discharge of this painful, but necessary duty, had gone on board—and none remained but the infantry divisions, for whose embarkation at nightfall, every preparation had been completed.

From the continued inaction of Soult, men's opinions changed, and it was generally supposed that no action would be fought, and that the English divisions would effect an embarkation without any serious annoyance. All was prepared for the reception of the regiments on board the transports, and the boats were ready to pull, at a moment's notice, to the beach. Sir John had issued his last orders, and had mounted his horse to ascertain, by personal inspection, that the outposts were on the alert, when an alarm was given, that the French were in motion, and a few minutes confirmed the report.

Under a heavy fire from the guns in battery on the left of his line, and the whole of his field artillery, Soult came forward with his infantry formed in three solid columns, and covered by the whole of his light troops in skirmishing order. The British pickets were immediately driven in, and the village of Elvina carried. Pursuing this success, the first column of the French, with one wing, assailed the right division, under Baird—while with the other, it out-flanked him by the valley. The second column attacked the English centre; and the third, marched by Palavia against the left. No time had been consumed in manœuvring—and the manner in which Soult came boldly forward, showed a firm determination on his part, to bring matters to a decisive issue.

The British general met these movements promptly, and detached the reserve, under Paget, to turn the French left, and threaten the battery on the ridge. Fraser was directed to support this movement; and the 4th regiment, forming the right of Baird's division, was thrown back, and opened a flanking fire upon the column moving by the valley, while the 50th and 42d were ordered to retake the village

of Elvina. A severe and protracted struggle here took place ; but the French were forced from the enclosures, and eventually from the village itself. The 42d having fallen back, the enemy, reinforced, again rushed forward ; and Elvina became a second time, the scene of a severe encounter.

The reserve had now come into action, and supporting the light troops who held the valley, checked the advance of the enemy there. The left and centre were also warmly engaged ; and along the whole line, from right to left, the attacks of the enemy were furiously made, and as steadily repelled. Almost the whole of the British divisions were now under fire ; men, on both sides, fell fast, and the right wing had lost its general, for Sir David Baird had been severely wounded and carried off the field.

At this period of the battle, while the attention of Sir John Moore was engrossed in watching the arduous struggle between his troops and the enemy, for the possession of Elvina, a round shot struck his left breast, and threw him heavily upon the ground ; but though the wound was mortal, he raised himself to a sitting posture,* and for a few moments followed with his eyes the movements of the troops, who were gaining ground rapidly. The sight appeared to give him pleasure ; his countenance brightened, and he allowed himself to be removed from the field.

In the mean time, all went gallantly on. The reserve having cleared the valley of the enemy's dismounted dragoons, turned Soult's left, and threatened the high ground on which the French battery was raised. Elvina had been carried at the point of the bayonet, and Palavia was in possession of the English. Night was falling fast. The British were far in advance of the ground which they

* "Then was seen the dreadful nature of his hurt ; the shoulder was shattered to pieces, the arm was hanging by a piece of skin, the ribs over the heart broken, and bared of flesh, and the muscles of the breast torn into long strips, which were interlaced by their recoil from the dragging of the shot."—*Napier*.

originally occupied, and the enemy falling back in evident confusion. Soult's defeat was complete, and had light but lasted for an hour or two, his discomfiture would have been signally disastrous. His ammunition was nearly expended. The Mero in his rear, was now filled by the tide, and the half-ruined bridge of El Burgo, was the only means by which the beaten army could retire. But circumstances did not justify Sir John Hope, who had assumed the command, to continue a battle in the dark, with an enemy of superior force, and in a strong position. He accordingly contented himself with carrying out the original intentions of the dying general, and proceeded to embark the troops without difficulty or confusion. The operation was ably executed; the pickets, having lighted their fires, covered the retirement of the columns; and when morning broke, they, in turn, fell back upon the beach, "under the protection of Hill's brigade, which was posted near the ramparts of the town."

The losses sustained by the rival armies were very disproportionate—the British casualties being only estimated at eight hundred men, while that of the French was computed at nearly three thousand. This disparity in casualties, circumstances will readily account for. The superiority of the French artillery in number was rendered unavailing from the broken surface not permitting the guns to be advanced, while those of the British, though few, were already in position, and consequently were worked with murderous effect. An ample supply also of muskets and fresh ammunition had been found in store at Coruña—and the arms, which accidents and bad weather had rendered in a great degree unserviceable, were fortunately replaced by others fresh from England. From these causes, the British fire had been very superior to that maintained by the French.

Never was victory so heavily alloyed by an individual calamity as that of Coruña, by the fall of Sir John Moore. His last hours were cheered by the consciousness that

for his country he had done his best—and his death was in perfect keeping with the chivalrous character an honourable career had gained. To the last his intellects continued clear—notwithstanding that the severity of his wound must have occasioned intense suffering, no mental aberrations were apparent to those around him—and although the sword was painfully inconvenient, he refused the kind offices that would have removed it, remarking—“I had rather it should go out of the field with me.”

He was removed in a blanket by six soldiers, who evinced their sympathy by tears; and when a spring waggon came up, and it was proposed that Sir John should be transferred to it, the poor fellows respectfully objected, “as they would keep step, and carry him more easily.” Their wishes were attended to, and the dying General was conveyed slowly to his quarters in the town, occasionally stopping the bearers to look back upon the field, whenever an increased firing arrested his attention. All hope was over—he lingered for a little, talking feebly, but collectedly, to those around, and dividing his last thoughts, apparently, between his country and his kindred. The kindness of his disposition was in death remarkable. Turning to an aide-de-camp, he desired to be remembered to his sister—and feebly pressing Colonel Anderson's hand, his head dropped back, and he died without a struggle.

As a wish had been expressed by the departed, that he should be laid in the field on which he fell, the rampart of the citadel was happily chosen for his “resting-place.”*

* A small column, erected to the memory of the British General, bears the following inscriptions:

“A la Gloria
del
Ex^{mo} S^r D. Juan Moore, Gen^l del Ex^{to} Ingleso,
Y a la de sus valientes compatriotas,
la
España agradecida.”

On

A working party of the 9th turned up the earth—and at midnight, wrapped in a cloak and blanket, his uncoffined remains were interred by the officers of his staff,—the burial-service was read by torch-light,—earth fell on kindred clay,—the grave was filled,—and in the poet's words, "They left him alone with his glory."*

History is a stern task—and to execute it well, every feeling must be sacrificed to fidelity. Never was the ordeal to which an unfortunate Commander was subjected, so gently exercised—no man obtained a larger share of sympathy from his countrymen—and none deserved it better. Misfortunes and mistakes were half forgotten—and the failure of Moore's campaign was attributed to that evil influence exercised by individuals at home and on the peninsula, by whom he was misguided in the commencement, and abandoned in the end. His merits were liberally admitted—his failings generously excused. On the living, popular disapprobation descended with unsparing severity, while the faults of the departed soldier seemed buried in his warrior-grave.

That ample justice was done to a meritorious servant, by the people of England, none can deny. His deserts were appreciated and acknowledged—and his well-earned reputation had nothing to fear, but from the comparisons in which his admirers have injudiciously indulged. To claim equality as a Commander for Moore, with Wellington, Napoleon, and Soult, no circumstances will warrant.

On the other side,—

"Batalla de Coruña a 18 de Enero,
Año 1809."

Marshal Soult also ordered the following inscription to be engraved upon a rock, near the spot where Sir John Moore fell:—

"*Hic cecidit Johannes Moore, Dux Exercitus,
In pugna Januarii xvi. 1809,
Contra Gallos, a Duce Dalmatiæ ductos.*"

* Victories of the British Armies.

H H 2

Sir John was a first-rate officer—but he never could have been a great Commander. He was an able tactician—understood thoroughly the economy of an army—handled troops well—had a sound discretion, and a clear head—but a constitutional defect in some degree neutralized these admirable qualities. Moore wanted confidence in himself—he was haunted by a fear of responsibility—and “a constant dread of doing that which was wrong, of running himself and his troops into difficulties from which they might not be able to extricate themselves, were a great deal too active to permit either his talents or his judgment properly to exert their influence. Sir John Moore had earned the highest reputation as a General of division; he was aware of this, and perhaps felt no inclination to risk it; at all events he was clearly incapable of despising partial obstacles in the pursuit of some great ultimate advantage”*—and, rich in his own resources, of surmounting difficulties, and not desponding when allies were faithless, and friends proved false.

Sir John Moore's misfortunes have been attributed to various causes, and among many, to the inability and bad conduct of his officers. That most of them were inexperienced, and many indifferent to their duties, may have been true. But let it be remembered, that vacillation in a leader is certain to produce want of confidence in subordinates; and that the estimate of Sir John's abilities, had not risen among his officers during the progress of the retreat. The open manner in which they expressed their dissatisfaction at being hurried from the presence of an enemy, whom they had every reason to believe they had power, had they permission, to chastise, was censurable in a military point of view; and, in example and effect, this manifestation of feeling was dangerous and inexcusable. But let justice be extended to the living and the dead; let

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

wounded pride and personal suffering be taken into account; let the daring gallantry, which was invariably displayed in every collision with the enemy, be recollected; and it will not be difficult to find apology for expressions of discontent, at flying from the presence of an army, to whom, in every trial, they had proved themselves immeasurably superior.

It would be as ridiculous to defend the policy, which, at the eleventh hour, despatched Sir John Moore into Spain,* as it would be unwise to assert, that the conduct of the campaign was not, in several cases, obnoxious to censure. In sufficient time to have permitted him to have fallen back on Portugal unscathed, Moore ascertained that Spanish cooperation was utopian, and that Frere, on whom the maledictions of a nation fell, under visionary pretexts was urging him forward to his ruin. Would Wellington, under such convictions, have advanced a step? But the inflexibility of purpose, for which "the iron Duke" has been happily distinguished, was unfortunately wanting in Sir John Moore. Upright in intention himself, he was slow to believe that others were false and perfidious. He allowed specious assurances to influence him, although he had just reason to suspect that the individuals were unworthy of his confidence; and he temporized when he should have been obdurate. Time was unnecessarily lost in Salamanca, and time more uselessly expended afterwards in a vain effort to remove stores, which want of transport should have at once decided the English general in destroy-

* "The British general advanced unaided by or in communication with any Spanish force, except the remains of the army of the left, under the Marquis de la Romana, who continued to occupy Leon with that weak and inefficient force;—this, with about five thousand Asturian recruits under General Balasteros, that had not yet been engaged, being the only Spanish force now in the field in the whole north of Spain. Sir John Moore had no friendly corps to protect his flanks; no reinforcements to expect. He commanded an army brilliant in appearance, yet weak in numerical strength; but upon that, and that alone, was dependence to be placed for the successful result of a very bold advance."—*Lord Londonderry*.

ing. This delay induced the hurried movements which succeeded—and probably an action might have been fought and won, in less time than was wasted in Astorga. One object, from the moment he left Sahagun, seemed to influence Sir John; his anxiety was to reach the sea; * and, with an army superior in many points to that with which Waterloo was won, he exhausted that strength and spirit in wearying and inglorious marches, which, if put forth upon a battle-field, would have crushed the enemy that pressed it, and after a gallant victory, secured a leisure, and most probably an unmolested retreat.

Those who defend the course adopted by Sir John Moore, maintain that the offer of battle at Lugo, which Soult declined, was all that the English general was warranted in doing. Nothing is more inconclusive than this assertion. With the supporting force which the French marshal had within two marches of his rear, he would, to use Napoleon's words, have "known little of his trade," if he had not taxed his skill to amuse his opponent, and gain time for his reserves to come up. The same result was what both generals aimed at; both were desirous of a battle; and the difference existed only in its being instant with the one, and delayed with the other. An opportunity of attacking his enemy before his own troops had suffered from bad weather and fatigue, should have been sought for—and a retreating army has generally the power of forcing on an action when they please. The French pursuit was ardent. The English retreat, to judge by its tremendous marches, the destruction of stores, and abandonment of sick and

* "With respect to me and the British troops," said the commander, in an official letter, "it has come to that point which I have long foreseen. From a desire to do what I could, I made the movement against Soult: as a diversion, it has answered completely; but as there is nothing to take advantage of it, I have risked the loss of the army for no purpose. I have no option, now, but to fall down to the coast as fast as I am able. We must all make forced marches, from the scarcity of provisions, and to be before the enemy, who, by roads upon our flanks, may otherwise intercept us."—*Southey*.

stragglers, had assumed all the character of an army driven to the last extremity, and seeking its salvation by the precipitancy of its movements. All that daily occurred, showed that the general was alarmed for the safety of soldiers, whose discipline and confidence were deteriorated by the privations and fatigue of the retreat. With these impressions, a feint, at any moment, would have produced a battle.* Pickets, directed to retire in disorder—a battalion, by preconcerted arrangement, giving way;—any of these, had Moore really wished to bring on an action, would have readily succeeded. But to gain the sea, appeared to be the grand object at which he strained; for even when advancing a month before, by a sad prescience of misfortune, “his heart and soul seemed turned to the Portuguese frontier.”†

The private character of Sir John Moore was unstained by a single vice; and in orderly habits, and careful apportionment of time, he offered a noble example for an army to emulate. “He always rose between three and four in the morning, lighted his fire and candle by a lamp, and wrote till breakfast hour. Afterwards, he received commanding officers, transacted business, and then rode out to view the troops, or reconnoitre the country.” “His table was plentiful, his guests varying from fourteen to twenty. With these he talked familiarly, drank a few glasses of wine, returned to his orderly business, and was in bed by ten o’clock.”‡

In the ablest military writer of his times,§ Sir John Moore has been fortunate in finding a historian both able and anxious to do justice to his memory and virtues; and

* “Soult, an experienced general, commanding troops habituated to war, might be tempted, but could never be forced to engage in a decisive battle among those rugged mountains, where whole days would pass in skirmishing, without any progress being made towards crippling an adversary.”—*Napier*.

† Lord Londonderry.

§ *Napier*.

‡ *Memoirs of Sir John Moore*.

the following sketch is worthy of the pen that traced it, and of the character it commemorates.

“His tall graceful person, his dark searching eyes, strongly defined forehead, and singularly expressive mouth, indicated a noble disposition and a refined understanding. The lofty sentiments of honour habitual to his mind, adorned by a subtle playful wit, gave him in conversation an ascendancy, that he could well preserve by the decisive vigour of his actions. He maintained the right with a vehemence bordering upon fierceness, and every important transaction in which he was engaged increased his reputation for talent, and confirmed his character as a stern enemy to vice, a steadfast friend to merit, a just and faithful servant of his country. The honest loved him, and the dishonest feared him.”

From his countrymen, at least those whose praise was to be valued, Sir John Moore received the commendation he deserved. In alluding to the campaign in which Moore commanded, “the Great Captain of the age” observes, “I can see but one error; when he advanced to Sahagun, he should have considered it a movement of retreat, and sent officers to the rear, to mark and prepare the halting places for every brigade.” Napoleon asserted, that to the talents and firmness of their leader, the deliverance of the British army was to be ascribed; and that, if he committed a few trifling errors, they were to be attributed to the peculiarity of his situation. His great rival* bears an honourable testimony that “Sir John took every advantage that the country afforded, to oppose an active and vigorous resistance, and he finished, by dying in a combat that must do credit to his memory.” Probably the summary of his character, as given by a brother soldier,† conveys in brief but expressive language, the strongest estimate of both his merits and his virtues.

* Marshal Soult.

† Lord Londonderry.



John Moore

London: R. H. B. & Co. 1800, printed

“ The British army has produced some abler men ; and many, in point of military talent, were and are quite his equals ; but it cannot, and perhaps never could boast of one more beloved, not by his personal friends alone, but by every individual that served under him.”



CHAPTER XXX.

CORUNA—ADMIRABLE CONDUCT OF REGIMENTAL OFFICERS IN THAT BATTLE—
OPERATIONS OF SOULT—DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ENTERTAINED IN ENGLAND
REGARDING THE CAMPAIGN—FRENCH EXAGGERATIONS—STATE OF SPAIN—
ITS ARMIES AND GENERALS—SPANISH OPERATIONS—ZARAGOZA—THE CITY
INVESTED—ITS STRENGTH AND RESOURCES—OUR LADY OF THE PILLAR—
PROGRESS OF THE SIEGE—FALL OF ZARAGOZA—STATE OF THE CITY AND
INHABITANTS—SUMMARY OF EVENTS—OPERATIONS OF ROMANA—OF SOULT—
AFFAIR OF RIBIDAVIA—ROMANA DEFEATED—PORTUGUESE ARMY DESTROYED
—MURDER OF FREIRE—SOULT APPEARS BEFORE OPORTO—THAT CITY CARRIED
BY ASSAULT—CRUELITIES COMMITTED BY THE SOLDIERY.

CORUNA was a well-won field; the earlier dispositions were creditable to the departed chief; and no general was better supported by his battalion officers than Sir John Moore. He had fallen in the heat of the conflict; the second in command had been already carried off the field, and, to a certain extent, brigades and regiments were left to the discretion of their respective officers. From the gallant and soldier-like style in which the battle, under these discouraging circumstances, was brought to a successful close, it is not too much to say, that however remiss in strict discipline during the retreat, the subordinate officers of the English army upon the battle ground shewed a noble example to their men, and exhibited a confidence and ability that justly elicited the well-merited praise of their superiors.

Coruña was but a melancholy triumph, for the excitement attendant upon victory was wanting. "No pursuit, no trophies, no prisoners, attested the services and fortune of the army." In the morning the French endeavoured to

annoy the removal of the rear-guard, but the exertions of the seamen soon placed it beyond the range of the artillery they had brought to bear upon the bay. The embarkation of the troops, however, wanted the exhilaration attending an operation naturally accompanied with so much activity, life, and spirit; all seemed sombre and depressed; "we were flying from the land, which was left in the undisturbed possession of troops vanquished on the preceding day, but now preparing to fire the last taunting discharges against soldiers, whom fortune appeared to have frowned upon, even in victory."*

It was creditable to the inhabitants of Coruña, that with very indifferent means of defence, they held the town until the 19th, and thus covered the final departure of the fleet, which was clear of the harbour before the tri-coloured flag was hoisted on the citadel. A large quantity of valuable stores was found within the place, and afforded a very seasonable supply to the French marshal, whose munitions were completely exhausted. Without a moment of unnecessary delay, Soult vigorously continued his operations. Ferrol, from its strength, its garrison, and its general importance, was expected to have offered a stout resistance, but it surrendered shamefully upon the 26th—and, assisted by the ample resources that fortress contained, the Duke of Dalmatia reduced Gallicia, and suppressed the flame of popular discontent, which was, however, too deeply kindled to be totally extinguished. The cause of Spain was virtually lost. "Her armies were dispersed, her government bewildered, and her people dismayed; the cry of resistance had ceased, and in its stead the stern voice of Napoleon, answered by the tread of 300,000 veterans, were heard throughout the land."†

In England, the sad reverses of Sir John Moore's campaign had been severely felt, because that more had been expected to result from it than any circumstances could

* Leith Hay.

† Napier.

warrant. Long and violent parliamentary discussions ensued, but they produced factious debates, rather than calm inquiry into the true causes of the discouraging failure on the Peninsula. The temperate part of the nation rendered ample justice to the zeal and abilities of him who had fallen in his country's cause, while more violent partisans were found, who maintained the most opposite opinions; one, overloading the memory of Moore with injudicious praise, the other aspersing it with unmerited invective; with one party, his last campaign was held up as a matchless specimen of military tactic, while another endeavoured to affix to his conduct errors he had never committed, and attributed misfortunes to the departed soldier, which had originated from circumstances utterly beyond human foresight or control.

The most exaggerated statements respecting the losses sustained by the British army were circulated by the French, and credited throughout the continent. "Three regiments," they said, "the 42d, 50th, and 52d, had been entirely destroyed in the action—and Sir John Moore killed in attempting to charge at their head with the vain hope of restoring the fortune of the day. The English had lost everything which constitutes an army; artillery, horses, baggage, ammunition, magazines, and military chests. Of eighty pieces of cannon they had landed, they had re-embarked no more than twelve;—200,000 weight of powder, 16,000 muskets, and 2,000,000 of treasure, (about 83,000*l.*) had fallen into the hands of the pursuers, and treasure yet more considerable had been thrown down the precipices along the road between Astorga and Coruña, where the peasantry and the soldiers were now collecting it. Five thousand horses had been counted which they had slaughtered upon the way—five hundred were taken at Coruña, and the carcasses of twelve hundred were infecting the streets when the conquerors entered that town. The English would have occupied Ferrol and seized the squadron there, had it not been for the pre-

cipitance of their retreat, and the result of the battle to which they had been brought at last. Thus, then, had terminated their expedition into Spain! Thus, after having fomented the war in that unhappy country, had they abandoned it to its fate! In another season of the year, not a man of them would have escaped; now, the facility of breaking up the bridges, the rapidity of the winter torrents, shortness of days, and length of nights, had favoured their retreat."

From the day when the last transport quitted the harbour of Coruña, the subjugation of the Peninsula appeared to have been accomplished: and the military attitude of France had become so imposing, as to induce Europe to believe that any national effort of the people to free themselves from Napoleon's yoke, would be only an idle display of feeling without a chance of its leading to success. In views and interests, the Spaniards were more disunited than ever; and in the chief cities, the noblesse consented cheerfully to the restoration of Joseph Bonaparte, and the multitude had tacitly assented. The authorities, with few exceptions, tendered an unconditional allegiance; and in Madrid, thirty thousand persons subscribed their names to an entreaty to the Emperor, that his brother should become their King, and plighted their loyalty by a voluntary obligation, taken in presence of the Host. All bespoke a settled security. The northern provinces were in undisputed possession of Napoleon. Every fortress was occupied by his soldiers, and all connected and secured by intermediate posts. Every road from Bayonne to Madrid, was admirably guarded, and every route had its military establishment. Including garrisons, dépôts, and men in hospital, the entire French force in Spain actually exceeded three hundred and thirty thousand men, of whom forty thousand were cavalry.

What a miserable contrast was exhibited to this, by the internal administration and military state of Spain! The wrecks of the beaten armies were in existence; but they

were armies but in name. The Junta had learned no wisdom from misfortune; nor had their venality and corruption abated. After deposing Cuesta, Castanos, and Galluzzo from their commands, they suddenly restored the former, not from any confidence in his abilities, but because they considered that the appointment would be popular. He who was a prisoner to-day, was placed to-morrow at the head of an army; and their raw levies were entrusted to the direction of an incapable and obstinate old man, with whom to punish with unbounded severity, "and rush headlong into battle, constituted, in his mind, all the functions of a general."

Soon after the departure of Napoleon from the capital, the Spanish generals commenced operations with their usual inability, and consequently, with their usual success. Venegas and Serna had been detached to scour the country round Tarancon and Aranjuez; Palacios advanced to Vilharta; and the Duke of Infantado moved on Toledo, intending to occupy that city and Aranjuez, break down the bridges, and hold the line of the Tagus. He reached Carascosa on the 14th of January; and there learned that Venegas was already routed at Ucles by Victor, and his army dispersed or destroyed. Infantado instantly fell back, and was joined by Palacios afterwards, at Mudela, whither, and after a most harassing retreat, in which he lost all his artillery, and most of his soldiers, he arrived in the beginning of February with the remnant of his army.

The next occurrence of the greatest military importance, was the second siege of Zaragoza. After the rout at Tudela, the broken corps of O'Neil, and fugitives from the army of Castanos had fled for refuge to this city, which must have fallen, had the French pressed its investment without delay. But the sickness of the Duke of Montebello, and the errors committed by Ney and Moncey, allowed time to the inhabitants to prepare for a resolute defence; and a city, whose resistance was so celebrated before, was again fated to sustain a siege, which, with a

different result, in the annals of war remains without a parallel.

The third corps of the French army had remained in observation on the Xalon, waiting for the fifth to unite with it; but Mortier did not join Moncey until the 20th of December, and with a force of thirty-five thousand chosen troops, the marshals advanced, and Zaragoza was regularly invested.

No city, probably, in the world afforded the same advantages, for what might be termed a mob-defence.* The houses seldom exceeded two stories in height, and were all fire-proof; while the massive churches and convents, constructed of the most durable materials, towered above the lower buildings, each, from its strength and solidity, a castle. Zaragoza was provisioned for six months. There was an abundance of arms, most of them of the best quality, as they were English; an extensive powder manufactory was in the town; wine, medicines, and fresh meats were liberally provided; for money was abundant, the city itself being wealthy, and the military chest, when Castanos was defeated, had been carried from Tudela and deposited at Zaragoza. The remnant of the Spanish armies, with the corps which had retreated from Caparosa and Sanguessa, increased the regular garrison to thirty thousand men; while volunteers from the peasantry without, and the population within the walls, increased the actual defenders of Zaragoza to fifty-five thousand fighting men.

But the great strength of Zaragoza lay neither in its locality nor its numbers. Although every street was defensible, and every convent was a fortress, other causes rendered it more formidable to the besiegers than these.

* "The doors and windows of the houses were built up, and their fronts loop-holed; internal communications were broken through the party-walls, and the streets were trenched and crossed by earthen ramparts, mounted with cannon, and every strong building was turned into a separate fortification. There was no weak point, because there could be none in a town which was all fortress."—*Napier*.

The populace were superstitious, and they had been successful ; and Spanish pride and Spanish folly were equally and powerfully appealed to. To their immense works, and former defence, a constant reference was made—while religion lent all her aid, sometimes with the pageantry of processions, sometimes with denunciations of divine wrath ; but what was still more imposing upon a credulous community, miracles were got up for the occasion, and heaven—and none dared to doubt it—had declared itself unequivocally in favour of a city, so immediately under the especial patronage of Our Lady of the Pillar.*

The history of this memorable siege would require a volume, to chronicle its progress, from the investment of the city, to its surrender, when a heap of ruins. The rainy

* “ In no place would the Spaniards have imagined themselves so secure as in Zaragoza itself, which had been so wonderfully defended and delivered, and which they believed to be invincible through the protection of Our Lady of the Pillar, who had chosen it for the seat of her peculiar worship. During the former siege, prints of that idol had been distributed by women in the heat of action, and worn by the men in their hats, both as a badge and an amulet. The many remarkable escapes and deliverances which had occurred were ascribed, not to all-ruling and omnipotent Providence, but to the immediate interference of the *Magna Mater* of Zaragoza.

“ Palafox himself had been trained up with more than common care in the superstition of the place ; he and his brethren in their childhood had been taken every day to attend mass in the Holy Chapel, where the image was enshrined, dressed at such times in the proper costume of the infantes, as a mark of greater honour to the present goddess. An appearance in the sky, which at other times might have passed unremembered, and perhaps unnoticed, had given strong confirmation to the popular faith. About a month before the commencement of the first siege, a white cloud appeared at noon, and gradually assumed the form of a palm tree ; the sky being in all other parts clear, except that a few specks of fleecy cloud hovered about the larger one. It was first observed over the church of N. Senora del Portillo, and moving from thence till it seemed to be immediately above that of the pillar, continued in the same form about half an hour, and then dispersed. The inhabitants were in a state of such excitement, that crowds joined in the acclamation of the first beholder, who cried out, a miracle ! and after the defeat of the besiegers had confirmed the omen, a miracle it was universally pronounced to have been, the people proclaiming with exultation, that the Virgin had by this token prefigured the victory she had given them, and promised Zaragoza her protection as long as the world should endure.”—*Southey*.

season had set in ; but its mildness was unusual, and thick fogs favoured the besiegers, by protecting their approaches from the fire and sorties of the besieged. So far, the Lady of the Pillar, "had been tried, and found wanting."

Still, success on one side was generally met by some countervailing occurrence on the other. The Torrero, which in a great degree commanded the city, was carried by the French, while their simultaneous attack upon a suburb, by General Guzan, was repulsed with serious loss. But the progress of the besiegers was conducted steadily. The circuit of the city was effected ; and the investment was complete. On the 29th of December, trenches were opened ; next day, the city was regularly summoned, and as haughtily that summons was rejected.

It would be irrelevant to follow the progress of the siege. Outworks were won ; but fresh defences were as constantly presented. On the 10th of January a violent bombardment began ; and frequently, three thousand shells were thrown into the devoted town in twenty-four hours. On the 26th, fifty-five pieces of heavy ordnance battered the newly-raised works of the *enceinte*, and formed a practicable breach. The French vigorously assaulted it the following morning, and after a desperate resistance, gained the summit ; where, however, they could not maintain themselves, as the citizens, from behind an interior retrenchment, kept up an incessant fire, and every moment sallied forth and fought hand to hand with the troops and workmen, who were endeavouring to form the lodgement. In these fierce encounters, women and priests were observed among the foremost and most courageous ; and to contend openly with such enthusiasm was hopeless.* The besiegers, therefore, confined themselves to the slow but certain operations of the sap—and by its insidious advances on the

* "The difficulties of the French were indeed fast increasing, for while enclosing Zaragoza, they were themselves encircled by insurrections, and their supplies so straitened, that famine was felt in their camp. Disputes amongst the generals also diminished the vigour of the operations, and the

6th, penetrated into the principal street, named the Corso, where the buildings are of great solidity. Then the conflict assumed the greatest degree of obstinacy; each house became a citadel, and required to be separately attacked; and the Spaniards when driven from one room, renewed the combat in the next, and fought with an obstinacy scarcely to be credited. Zaragoza, in a military sense, was now at the mercy of the besiegers. The French were absolutely within the walls; but though "the regular defences had crumbled before the skill of the assailants," the spirit of the people appeared, if possible, to become more devoted and more indomitable. The leaders of the populace, "with redoubled activity and energy, urged the defence, but increased the horrors of the siege, by a ferocity pushed to the very verge of phrensy. Every person, without regard to rank or age, who excited the suspicions of these furious men, or of those immediately about them, was instantly put to death; and, amidst the noble bulwarks of war, a horrid array of gibbets was to be seen, on which crowds of wretches were suspended each night, because their courage had sunk beneath the accumulating dangers of their situation, or because some doubtful expression or gesture of distress had been misconstrued by their barbarous chiefs."*

It is impossible for the imagination to conceive the ferocity that distinguished this protracted defence—but the perseverance of the assailants, though shaken, was not subdued. One after another the strongest buildings fell. No solidity could withstand the operations of the French miners. The University, the Church of our Lady of the Pillar, the Coso, the convents, were all a heap of ruins. Sixteen thousand shells had been expended,—forty-five

bonds of discipline being relaxed, the military ardour of the troops naturally became depressed. The soldiers reasoned openly upon the chances of success, which in times of danger, is only one degree removed from mutiny."—*Napier*.

* *Ibid*.

thousand pounds of gunpowder exploded beneath the surface of the earth. The city was half destroyed—a pestilence was raging—five hundred individuals perished on a single day—the living were not able to inter the dead—and heaps of human bodies were piled at the church doors, and left to dissolve in their own putridity. In the pestilential atmosphere, every thing speedily corrupted; a scratch was fatal as the most extensive injury, for it gangrened, and death in a few hours ensued. Of the leaders few remained. Tios Jorge and Marin, the *Limonadier* of the Coso, the Priest of St. Gil, all had perished by pestilence or the sword—and Palafox had long since disappeared, and concealed himself in a vault, some said labouring under fever, others, living in the indulgence of the lowest sensuality. The more ferocious of the defenders were no more, and it was at last decided to offer the surrender of a place, rather to be called a charnel house than a city. Terms were accordingly proposed, which, according to the Spanish writers, were conceded by Marshal Lannes, and as the French assert, indignantly rejected. Whichever statement be correct, is a matter of little consequence. On the night of the 20th, the walls next the castle were given up to the French—and on the following morning some thirteen thousand men, the remains of the garrison, marched out, and laid down their arms, after a resistance of fifty-two days with open trenches, twenty-three of which were a war of houses. The town, on entering it, presented a dreadful and melancholy spectacle; entire districts of it were demolished by repeated explosions, and presented merely a mass of ruins, thickly spread over with mutilated limbs and carcasses; the few houses which fire and the mine had spared, were riddled by shot and shells; their interiors were cut through with communications, the walls loop-holed, the doors and windows barricadoed, and the streets blocked up with numberless traverses. The dirt, corruption, and misery, attending the crowding together of more than one hundred thousand souls into a city calculated for only forty thousand,

with all the hardships attendant on a long *siège*, had generated a frightful epidemic, more relentless than the sword. "In the midst of the ruins and bodies with which the streets were filled, were observed here and there crawling along a few inhabitants, pale, emaciated, and cast down, who seemed on the point of following their dead comrades, whom they had been unable to remove. From an enumeration made at the commencement and at the termination of this extraordinary and terrible siege, it has been ascertained that in fifty-two days, fifty-four thousand individuals perished; being two-thirds of the military, and the half of the inhabitants." *

A summary of events, in which the Spanish arms were singularly unfortunate, will be sufficient to connect that period of Peninsular history, when its future conqueror was otherwise employed. Indeed, a minute detail would have but little interest. The same arrogance, inability, and jealousy in the generals, whom the Junta had appointed, led to the most calamitous results; while the conduct of the soldiery was chivalrous at times, and at others contemptible beyond description. Troops resisted gallantly to-day, who fled most ingloriously on the morrow. But what else could be expected from a corrupt government, a half-starved army, a discontented population, and generals obstinate in their errors, and to whom "misfortune brought no wisdom."

Romana, when he separated from Moore's army at Astorga, marched rapidly to the valley of the Syl and the Minho, followed close by the light cavalry of Franceschi, by whom his rear division was dispersed or destroyed. To cover Orense, he occupied the Puente de Bibey, with a detachment under general Mendizable. The post was attacked by a corps of Ney's army, under Marchand, and the Spaniards beaten and disbanded. Romana, after this disaster, retired to the frontier of Portugal, and at Oimbra

* Southey.

where Moore had established a magazine, the Marquess endeavoured to collect fugitives ; and here he was abandoned by his worthless colleague, Blake, who not only quitted Romana himself, but induced all whom he could influence to follow him.

Soult, in the mean time, was pushing the success which the easy reduction of Ferrol had opened for him. After a short halt at St. Jago de Compostello, he set out for the banks of the Minho, intending to pass that river, without delay. But on reaching it, he found that the flood had filled the channel of the stream, the peasantry had carried off the boats, and the Portuguese militia were under arms on the opposite bank, and ready to dispute his passage. The Duke of Dalmatia had received orders from Napoleon, in which he was urged to possess himself of Oporto, and he determined that no trifling obstacles should prevent the Emperor's plans from being effected. Boats were obtained at a distance from the Minho, and, with immense labour, they were transported overland to the Tamuga, a tributary of the greater stream. Manned by three hundred chosen soldiers of the marine corps, at day-break they entered the Minho, and the first division made good a landing ; but they were furiously assailed by the Portuguese, and, notwithstanding a heavy cannonade was maintained by the French artillery, from the opposite heights, those who disembarked were cut to pieces, and the remainder of the party saved themselves by returning to their own shore.* Soult abandoned any farther attempt at that point, and, ascending the river, effected a passage at Ribidavia. This

* "This action was infinitely creditable to the Portuguese, and it had a surprising influence on the issue of the campaign. It was a gallant action, because it might reasonably have been expected that a tumultuous assemblage of half-armed peasants, collected on the instant, would have been dismayed at the sight of many boats filled with soldiers, some pulling across, others landing under the protection of a heavy battery that thundered from the midst of a multitude of troops, clustering on the heights, and thronging to the edge of the opposite bank in eager expectation."—*Napier*.

was not accomplished without serious annoyance. The Portuguese kept up a teasing fusilade when the line of the French march approached within musket range of the bank of the Minho; and, in two bodies, the Spanish peasantry offered on their side, a firm but ineffective opposition. They were scattered by the French cavalry, many of them cut down, and their villages set on fire.

For a short time a band of Gallicians offered a more successful resistance. The bridges over the Morenta and Nagueira having been strongly barricadoed, and the fords rendered impassable by heavy rains, the march of the French was arrested for some hours, until a brigade of infantry came up, and forced a passage, driving the Spaniards back upon an immense mob of half-armed peasants, who, to the number of ten thousand, were formed in confused masses, on a hill that overlooks Ribidavia. Soult, with the first troops that came to hand, attacked and dispersed this unwieldy rabble, who were chiefly commanded by priests, twenty of whom were found among the slain.

The Marshal reached Orense on the 19th. Having secured the bridge, and leaving a garrison in Tuy, he deposited there his heavy guns, and every thing that could retard his movements, and, with sixteen light field-pieces and six howitzers, marched rapidly upon Oporto.

The force opposed to him was formidable in nothing but its numbers; Freire, with a few regular troops, and the Ordenanzas of the Entre Minho e Douro, was at Braga. Silveira had his head-quarters at Chaves, with a similar force, of the Tras os Montes; and Romana, with ten thousand men, occupied Oimbra and Monterey. The two latter generals were in communication with each other, and formed a first line, while Freire's troops at Braga composed a second. An entrenched position, in front of Oporto, was intended to cover that city, and was defended by a levy raised by the bishop of that place, assisted by the inhabitants and a few regular troops.

With his characteristic activity, Soult instantly attacked

Romana at Monterey. On the 6th of March, the Spaniards were driven from the town, and, in confusion, attempted to gain the Puebla de Sanabria. But a rear division of some three thousand men being headed by the light cavalry, and overtaken by the voltigeurs, formed a square and turned upon their pursuers. The effort was brave, but unfortunate. Franceschi, turning a regiment of dragoons against every face of the weak and ill-formed square, broke it by a simultaneous charge, and, in a moment, effected its destruction. In masses the Spaniards were sabred and trodden down; the slaughter was consequently immense, and it was computed that fully one thousand bodies were left upon the broken ground the square had originally covered.

Romana retired to the valley of the Syl; and Silviera, beaten at Villaza, retreated to a position behind Chaves,* with the loss of his artillery. On the 13th, the town surrendered—and, having established his hospitals in the place, without delay the French marshal pushed boldly through the defiles of Venda Nova, Ruivaens, and Salmonde, scattering peasants headed by their priests, who made a feeble effort to arrest his march, and routing the infamous banditti which composed the second line of defence, and whose villany had been just consummated by the murder of their unfortunate commander.† The French

* "The fighting men were reduced to twenty-one thousand, and Soult, partly from the difficulty of guarding his prisoners, partly from a desire to abate the hostility of the Portuguese, permitted the militia and ordinanza to return to their homes, after taking an oath not to resume their arms. To some of the poorest he gave money and clothes, and he enrolled, at their own request, the few regular troops taken in Chaves."—*Napier*.

† Baron Eben, a German officer in the English service, in a letter to Sir John Cradock, thus describes this diabolical transaction:—

"I perceived the danger of the general, and proposed to take him to my quarters. My adjutant offered him his arm: when I spoke to him, he only replied, 'Save me!' At the entrance of my house I was surrounded by thousands, and heard the loud cry of 'Kill! kill!' I now took hold of him, and

cavalry gave the fugitives no respite. They were again overtaken by Franceschi at Falperra, and many cut to pieces on the spot. Indeed that day had literally completed the ruin of the Portuguese as an army; they lost 3,500 in killed and wounded, 500 prisoners, and the whole of their artillery and stores. Nothing stopped the onward career of the French marshal. Though fiercely opposed upon the banks of the Ave, after some hard fighting, he forced the passage of that river; and on the 27th the whole of his army was in position in front of the works before Oporto.

The entrenched camp, on which the safety of the city was to depend, was filled with a tumultuous and ferocious mob, more occupied with murdering unfortunate individuals on whom their unfounded suspicions fell, than in making preparations for a vigorous resistance. Their confidence was absurd and unwarrantable; for past reverses were entirely attributed to treachery in their generals; and the delusion continued, until another fatal lesson proved how unavailing mob power is when opposed to organized force.

Marshal Soult, anxious to save the city from the consequences attendant on a storm, endeavoured to effect a capitulation, but his overtures were rejected. General Foy, in an attempt to negotiate, was taken prisoner, and

attempted to force my way into the house, and a gentleman slightly wounded him with the point of his sword under my arm. He collected all his strength, and rushed through them, and hid himself behind the door of the house. The people surrounded me, and forced me from the house. To draw the attention of the people from the general, I ordered the drummers to beat the alarm, and formed the *ordenanzas* in ranks; but they kept a constant fire upon my house, where the general still was. As a last attempt to save him, I now proposed that he should be conducted to prison, in order to take a legal trial; this was agreed to, and he was conducted there in safety. I now hoped that I had succeeded, as the people demanded to be led against the enemy, now rapidly advancing, in number about two thousand. I again formed them, and advanced with them; but soon after, I heard the firing again, and was informed that the people had put the general to death with pikes and guns."

very narrowly escaped being murdered by the mob.* On the evening of the 28th a feint upon the left of the entrenchments succeeded in distracting the attention of the Portuguese, who supposing that the French were moving forward to the assault, kept up all night a furious fire from every gun upon the works. When day broke they discovered how idly they had been employed; when presently the French columns were seen advancing with imposing steadiness. Nothing could withstand an assault made with unshaken bravery, and directed with consummate skill. The lines, the guns, and the supporting redoubts, were all carried by the bayonet. "Two battalions broke through the barriers of the city, poured into the streets, and penetrated to the bridge, driving before them a terrified and helpless crowd of men, women, and children. These unhappy fugitives rushed wildly on the bridge. The nearest boats gave way to the pressure, and sunk with their wretched burden. The cries of these poor creatures were stifled by the waters; and the spectacle was so fearful, that the Frenchmen in pursuit paused in the work of death, and exerted themselves to save as many as they could."† "But this terrible destruction did not complete the measure of the city's calamities; two hundred men, who occupied the bishop's palace, fired from the windows, and maintained that post until the French gathering round them in strength, burst the doors, and put all to the sword. Every street and house now rung with the noise of the combatants and the shrieks of distress; for the French soldiers, exasperated by long hardships, and prone, like all soldiers, to ferocity and violence during an assault, became frantic with fury, when, in one of the principal squares, they found several of their com-

* "He was mistaken for Loison, and the people called out to kill '*Maneta*,' but with great presence of mind he held up his hands; and the crowd, convinced of their error, suffered him to be cast into the jail."—*Napier*.

† Sherer.

rades who had been made prisoners, fastened upright, and living, but with their eyes bursted, their tongues turned out, and their other members mutilated and gashed. Those that beheld the sight spared none who fell in their way."*

The numbers who were exterminated after the storming of the city, cannot be remembered without exciting horror of those cruelties which are attendant upon warfare, for, on the lowest computation, ten thousand Portuguese perished on that disastrous day.

* Napier.



CHAPTER XXXI.

SOULT AND HIS OFFICERS EXERT THEMSELVES TO RESTRAIN THE SOLDIERS—
CONCILIATORY MEASURES OF THE FRENCH MARSHAL—MURDER OF COLONEL
LAMETH—WAR IN CATALONIA—FALL OF ROSAS—DEFEAT OF VIVES—REDING
OBTAINS COMMAND OF THE SPANISH ARMY—IMPRUDENTLY DETERMINES TO
ATTACK ST. CYR—IS ATTACKED AND DEFEATED—ESCAPES TO TARRAGONA,
AND DIES OF HIS WOUNDS—SUCCEEDED BY BLAKE—GENERAL CHARACTER OF
THE PENINSULAR WAR—OPERATIONS OF VICTOR AND LAPISSE—MISTAKES OF
THE LATTER—CARTOAJAL DEFEATED AT CIUDAD REAL BY SEBASTIANI—
CUESTA FIGHTS VICTOR AT MEDELLIN—IS TOTALLY DEFEATED—SUMMARY
OF THE STATE OF SPAIN.

ALTHOUGH the atrocities committed at Oporto were horrible, it must be admitted that the ferocious treatment which the French, who were so unfortunate as to fall into the power of the Portuguese, had experienced at their hands, was quite sufficient to provoke a dreadful retaliation. The personal exertions of Soult, as well as those of his officers and many of the men, were incessantly employed to abate the fury of an exasperated soldiery; and to the humanity of these generous enemies, many of the inhabitants of the captured city were indebted for the preservation of their honour and their lives. In some time order was permanently restored, and the Duke of Dalmatia applied himself, with great ability, to soften down the asperity of the nation's temper, and reconcile the citizens to the presence of their conquerors. No contribution was exacted; plunder, when it could be recovered, was immediately restored to those from whom it had been taken. The soldiers were restrained from offering any insult to the inhabitants who remained; and those who had fled previous to, or during

the assault, were invited to return to their houses, under a plighted assurance of the French marshal's protection. This conciliatory system was attended with the best results; assassinations became daily more infrequent; and the wealthier inhabitants of Oporto, contrasting the mob government of fanatic demagogues and a mischievous and ambitious priest, with the firm and temperate administration of an enemy, eventually preferred the latter, and the marshal was solicited to obtain for them an independent government, under the protection of Napoleon; they renouncing, in the name of the people, all future fealty to the house of Braganza.

While Soult's conduct towards the people of Oporto was marked with impartiality and moderation, he took care to convince the Portuguese, that any violence on their part should be severely resented; and that, to uphold his own authority, and secure the safety of his soldiers he had ample means, and also the determination to employ them. An opportunity to prove it was unfortunately too soon afforded. Near the village of Arrifana, and within the French lines, Colonel Lameth, when returning from visiting the marshal, was waylaid and most inhumanly murdered; and his body left naked on the road side, after undergoing a disgusting mutilation. The assassination of a promising officer and personal friend, irritated the French marshal; and a sanguinary example was made, which, bad as the crime was, could not be justified by any usage, military or civil.*

* "Soult directed General Thomières to march, with a brigade of infantry, to Arrifana, and punish the criminals. Thomières was accompanied by a Portuguese civilian; and, after a judicial inquiry, he shot five or six persons, whose guilt was said to have been proved; but it is also certain that the principal actor, a Portuguese major of militia, and some of his accomplices, escaped across the Vouga to Colonel Trant; and the latter, disgusted at their conduct, sent them to Marshal Beresford. It would also appear, from the statement of a peasant, that Thomières, or those under him, exceeded Soult's orders; for, in that statement, attested by oath, it is said that twenty-four innocent persons were killed, and that the soldiers, after committing many atrocious excesses, burnt the village."—*Napier*.

We have already partially described events as they occurred in the province of Aragon, and it will be necessary to briefly notice the transactions which took place in Catalonia. In none of the provinces had the French encountered a more determined opposition—and, although no strangers to those awful visitations which war entails upon people who inhabit a country, itself the scene of contest, the Catalans continued to resist. Mongat had been taken and retaken; Gerona was twice besieged, and fiercely and successfully defended. With the exception of a few places of strength, the whole of Catalonia was in the hands of the insurgents; and a bold attempt made upon Barcelona, although it failed, showed Napoleon that the French troops employed in that province, were unequal to check the daring movements of its martial peasantry. Gouvion St. Cyr was, consequently, despatched thither—and, with an army of twenty thousand men, he commenced his operations, by laying siege to the town and fort of Rosas, with the divisions of Generals Reille and Pino.

Although the works of Rosas were weak and in bad condition, the assistance afforded by an English squadron in the bay, who had thrown a few seamen and marines into the citadel and fort Trinidad, not only saved the town and fort from falling by a *coup-de-main*, but obliged the French general to sit down regularly before the place. Lord Cochrane arriving during the siege, personally took charge of the fort, and reinforced its garrison by seamen and marines from the Imperieuse. A vigorous defence resulted; assaults upon the fort and town failed; at last the citadel, being no longer tenable, was surrendered—while Lord Cochrane withdrew his own people, and blew up the fort.

Immediately after the fall of Rosas, St. Cyr marched to the relief of Barcelona, which Vives, with nearly thirty thousand men, was preparing to besiege. The French general reached Llinos by a difficult route; and there

found his opponent already in position, with a corps of 10,000 men and twelve pieces of artillery.

St. Cyr, from the difficulty of the roads, had been obliged to send back his guns to Figueras; but, undismayed by this serious want of cannon, he attacked immediately in close columns. One of these, contrary to his orders, attempted to deploy, and was roughly handled and forced to retire; but the reserve came forward, and broke the Spanish line. Vives was completely routed, losing the whole of his artillery and stores, besides two thousand prisoners. Reding, with one division, managed to effect his retreat to Molino del Rey, by crossing the river Llobregat—while Vives, with difficulty escaped over the mountains on foot, and reached Tarragona subsequently in a fishing vessel.

When Vives imprudently advanced to give battle to St. Cyr, Caldagues was left in charge of the troops in front of Barcelona. A sally made by Duhesme was repulsed—but on learning that Vives had been severely beaten, Caldagues abandoned his magazines, and crossed the Llobregat. On the 21st, he was attacked and routed by St. Cyr, with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners and the whole of his artillery. Favoured by the intricacy of the country, his scattered forces effected their escape to Tarragona, where Vives had been committed to prison, deprived, from incapacity, of his command, and succeeded by Reding, a man differing in character from the generality of the Spanish commanders; for, though his talents were but moderate, his disposition was frank and humane, and his honesty and patriotism above suspicion.

Reding was well aware of the causes which had produced the ruin of the Spanish armies; and while he avoided a general action, he laboured assiduously to render his troops efficient, by improving their discipline, and maintaining the desultory system of warfare, so annoying to the enemy and beneficial to himself. But Spanish stupidity, as usual, marred its only chances of success.

The national arrogance, ever blind to its own inefficiency, mistook caution for cowardice, and the mob clamoured for a battle. Reding either would not, or dared not resist the popular outcry, although convinced that his yielding would prove ruinous; and from acting wisely on the defensive, he decided in an evil hour, upon attacking the French general.

The Spanish army occupied an immense extent of mountain country, its front forming a half-circle round St. Cyr, and extending nearly sixty miles. On the morning of the 14th, Reding commenced operations, which were fated to be very speedily interrupted. St. Cyr, on the 16th, marched against the Spanish centre, broke it by a bold and impetuous onset, and separated the wings completely, obliging that under Castro to fall back on Capellades, from whence it was driven next day in great confusion; and Ingualada, where Reding's magazines had been established, fell into the hands of the French. Leaving Chabot, with Chabran's brigade united to his own, to keep Castro in check, St. Cyr marched on the 18th to St. Magi, where Reding with his left had taken a strong position. Hearing of Castro's defeat, Reding had set out to assist him, and marching by the pass of Cabra with a Swiss regiment, a body of cavalry, and six light guns, he passed closely to the route by which St. Cyr, after forcing the position at St. Magi, was advancing to the abbey of Santa Crux. The Spanish troops there, after a spirited defence, abandoned the abbey and overtook and joined Reding, who having effected a junction with Castro at St. Colonna de Queralt, found himself once more at the head of fully ten thousand men.

But Reding's situation was truly dangerous. Vals, by which he had intended to fall back, was already occupied by the enemy, and his retreat consequently endangered. In this perplexity, the Spanish general took the resolution of retiring by the Col de Riba, hoping to reach Tarragona unmolested. On his route, he was fiercely attacked by

Souham, who, having permitted the advanced guard and a Spanish corps to pass him unassailed, threw himself upon part of the main body and rear-guard. The troops of Reding resisted with unusual spirit, beat the enemy fairly back, and continued their march. But being reinforced, the French pursued, and brought the Spaniards to action, forced their position, and totally changed the fortunes of the day; for panic-stricken, Reding's battalions suddenly broke their ranks, and hurried towards Tarragona, abandoning artillery, baggage, and stores; and, favoured by the darkness of night, most of the fugitives reached the city.

Reding also succeeded in escaping thither.* He had been severely wounded, and throughout these arduous operations, though his generalship was indifferent, he had shown a brave example to the Spanish army. Superior discipline, as it always does, led to his defeat; but the disgusting pride of his countrymen refused to admit the true cause, which produced an ignominious flight; and the cry of treason was raised by the cowards in the city, who had abandoned their leader on the field of battle. Reding did not survive long enough to undergo the degradation of being deposed from his command, or suffer personal violence from the hands of the sanguinary rabble. His wounds proved mortal, and he was succeeded first by Coupigny, and afterwards by Blake, who was appointed

* "He had been received at Tarragona with great dissatisfaction after the battle of Vals, and the interference of the British consul was necessary to save him from the first fury of the populace, who were always ready to attribute a defeat to the treachery of the general. His military conduct was, by his own officers, generally and justly condemned; but although his skill in war was slight, his courage and honesty were unquestionable; and he was of distinguished humanity; for, at this unhappy period, when the French prisoners in every part of Spain were tortured with the most savage cruelty; when to refrain from such deeds was to incur suspicion, Reding had the manliness not only to repress all barbarities within the range of his command, but even to conclude a convention with St. Cyr, under which the wounded men on both sides were to receive decent treatment, and to be exchanged as soon as their hurts were cured."—*Napier*.

captain-general of the Coronilla, a Spanish term applied to the united provinces of Catalonia, Valencia and Aragon.

Blake's command was, at its commencement, marked with some trifling advantages. A French detachment was cut off near the Cinca, and made prisoners;* and Alcanitz fell into the possession of the Spaniards. The enemy in Aragon were neither active nor successful. Junot was in bad health—his troops were disorderly and dispirited—and when Suchet arrived to supersede the Duke of Abrantes, the French army were in a state of insubordination which required all that general's activity and zeal to correct.

Blake's good fortune continued. Suchet, with about nine thousand men, attacked the Spanish general; and although the French dispositions were ably planned, numbers prevailed, and Suchet was heavily repulsed. The beaten troops were rallied, and brought off at night,† but the effect was felt over that quarter of the peninsula, and obtained numerous recruits for the Spanish army, while it seriously increased the depression and discontent which had appeared general among the French regiments, produced by previous losses and fatigue, and all the interminable annoyance which a vindictive people, in a mountain country, possess the power of inflicting on an invading force.

In the preceding notices of peninsular events, it was not the design of the writer, nor indeed would it have been desirable, to describe the various incidents of desultory

* "The Duke of Abrantes sent eight companies of infantry and thirty cuirassiers to retake the place (Monzon); but Baget having reinforced Pereña, the French were repulsed, and the Cinca, suddenly overflowing behind them, cut off their retreat. The cavalry, plunging with their horses into the river, escaped by swimming; but the infantry, finding the lower passages guarded by the garrison of Lerida, and the upper cut off by the partisan corps, after three days' marching and skirmishing, surrendered to Pereña and Baget."—*Napier*.

† "Blake's inactivity enabled Suchet to restore order; he caused the man who first commenced the alarm to be shot; and then, encouraging the troops that they might not seem to fly, he rested in position two whole days, after which he retreated to Zaragoza."—*Napier*.

warfare in the precise order of their occurrence. The theatre was so extensive, that the scene of action would be found on every line that radiated from the capital, until its point had reached the centre of the Pyrenees, or was lost in the waters of the sea. The actors were equally numerous—with rare exceptions, nameless men—priest and physician, the noble and his serf; the peasant, hitherto distinguished from his fellows by some personal deformity, or the exercise of an unusual trade—all were in turns upon the stage, all wielding the populace as they pleased—to-day the leader of a host—to-morrow the tenant of a dungeon. The careers of such men were necessarily ephemeral—for the nation did not betray its feelings by one bold burst of general resistance, but in feverish demonstrations, blazing forth at one time with bright but evanescent spirit, and then, as if exhausted by the exertion, calming down to a degree of passive submissiveness, which puzzled the generals of Napoleon as to what quarter they were to find an enemy, on whom they could employ their respective *corps d'armée*. Such was the general character of the war—such the usual course of its events—and the history of one province might almost pass as the history of another. A strong outline of the state of the Peninsula, when its deliverer for the second time arrived, was therefore preferred to a minuter narrative, as a local grouping would produce a bolder picture; while, if historic order were strictly observed, trifling events must be particularized, which, though interesting collectively, if separately described, would only produce a tedious and unprofitable detail.

While Soult was securing himself firmly at Oporto, it is necessary to notice the operations of Victor and Lapisse, who had been instructed by Napoleon to unite in an invasion of Portugal; and, in connexion with the Duke of Dalmatia, carry out a grand and comprehensive plan he had arranged, having for its design two most important objects—the occupation of Lisbon, and the expulsion

of the British army from the Tagus. In Soult's attempt to reach Oporto, by forcing his way through the province of Tras os Montes, Victor was to assist by manœuvring on the side of Badajoz, and pushing a column forward towards Lisbon, to unite itself with the Duke of Dalmatia, if he should succeed in reaching the Portuguese capital. The distance of the points on which these movements were to be executed, rendered it necessary to connect the corps while thus employed; and Lapisse, to secure the communications, was directed to occupy the line of country between Almeida and the Douro. He was further instructed to reduce Ciudad Rodrigo, if he could effect it by a *coup-de-main*; and on ascertaining that his colleague had reached Oporto, in conjunction with Victor, he was to cover Soult's advance upon the capital, and after Lisbon was safe and in possession of the French, cross the Guadiana, and establish the tranquillity of Andalusia.

These orders were as ably planned as they were imperfectly executed. Lapisse had been ordered to make an attempt on Ciudad Rodrigo; but his corps was weak, he had no heavy artillery, and, consequently, he was easily repulsed, and obliged to retire from a place, whose strength was far beyond his power of annoyance. His subsequent operations were equally injudicious. Reckless of the consequences that might result from leaving the French corps isolated at Oporto, he turned to his left to unite himself with Victor, while that general had consumed his time in seeking Cuesta and his army, first moving in pursuit of the Spanish general from Talavera to Truxillo, and afterwards, by long and fatiguing marches, to Merida, and finally to Medellin.

While Victor and Lapisse were thus engaged, a Spanish army under Cartoajal moved forward with twelve thousand men and twenty pieces of artillery, to attack Toledo; but he was interrupted in his route by Sebastiani, and driven back on Ciudad Real. The French general having forced the passage of the river, which Cartoajal endeavoured to defend, "a tumultuous action ensued,"

in which the Spaniards were totally routed, with the loss of their whole artillery, while a large number were slain upon the spot, and nearly three thousand taken prisoners. The remnant which had escaped death upon the battle-field, were scattered by the French cavalry, and driven for shelter to the Sierra Morena.

Victor's operations, when in pursuit of Cuesta, had led to many affairs between the rival armies; but the crisis was delayed until the 28th of March, when the Spanish general having been reinforced by the corps under Albuquerque and some Andalusian regiments, determined to accept a combat, and accordingly formed in order of battle on the plains of Don Benito, immediately beside the city of Medellin.

Cuesta's army consisted of twenty-five thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and twenty pieces of cannon. Victor's force was estimated at about half that amount in infantry and cavalry, but in guns he was far superior, having forty-two pieces on the field. In this affair the Spanish infantry behaved well; they had even gained ground upon the enemy at several points, and were pressing forward with great gallantry, when a sudden panic seized the cavalry, and it fled from the field without striking a blow. Cuesta did his best to rally the fugitives, but to no purpose. The French broke in upon the Spanish left, exposed by the flight of the cavalry, and turned it, at the moment when Cuesta was thrown from his horse, and bruised severely. All now became confusion and dismay. The Duke of Albuquerque, who commanded on the right, endeavoured to form his division into columns, and to retire in good order; but the columns were not yet formed when a heavy fire of artillery dispersed them, and the men could not again be recalled to their standards. The rout was complete—and the loss, in killed, wounded, and taken, was greater far than any which a Spanish army had yet sustained since the commencement of the war.* The

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

French soldiers, while their strength would permit, continued to follow and strike, until three-fifths of the whole Spanish army wallowed in blood. Six guns and several thousand prisoners were taken. General Frias, deeply wounded, fell into the hands of the victors; and so utter was the discomfiture, that for several days after, Cuesta could not rally a single battalion of infantry, and his cavalry was only saved by the speed of the horses.*

Such was the state of Spain when Sir Arthur Wellesley reached the Tagus. Nothing, indeed, could surpass the deplorable prospects of the peninsula; and, in both a military and civil point of view, her affairs appeared irretrievable. Pride and perfidy went hand in hand; corruption was found in every department; and Spain seemed doomed by her own misdeeds to aid oppression in its work, and consummate her ruin as a nation.

* Napier.



CHAPTER XXXII.

PORTUGAL—SIR JOHN CRADOCK AND MR. VILLIERS SENT FROM ENGLAND—Oporto—Lusitanian Legion—Lisbon—Inactivity of the French Marshals—Preparations for leaving the Tagus—Their effect upon the Portuguese—Violence of the people—Doubts as to whether Portugal was defensible—Military memorandum—Portuguese army placed at the disposal of England—Sir Arthur Wellesley declines the command, which is given to Major-General Beresford—it is re-organized and becomes effective—Cradock reinforced—Advances to Lumiar and Saccavem—Prepares for active operations—Movements of the French generals—Sir Arthur Wellesley appointed to the chief command in Portugal—Anchors in the Tagus—Effect produced by his arrival—Despatch to Lord Castlereagh.

WE have seen that the political aspect of Spain, from the time Napoleon crossed the Pyrenees to the embarkation of the English army at Coruña, had been daily becoming more inauspicious; and it will be found that affairs in Portugal were scarcely more promising in their appearance. Sir John Cradock had been sent from England to take command of such British troops as remained in the country after Moore had passed the frontier, and the conduct of political relations was entrusted to Mr. Villiers. The amity which once subsisted between England and Portugal, and which, notwithstanding French intrigue, was still believed to generally pervade the nation, encouraged a hope that a cordial union of interests might yet be effected between both countries; but the means by which this could have been accomplished were, for a time, overlooked. To persons unacquainted with the Peninsula, ignorant alike of its wants and its capabilities, this serious charge was confided, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was uselessly

retained in Ireland, "while Portugal, like a drunken man, at once weak and turbulent, was reeling on the brink of a precipice."

Sir John Cradock, on his way to Lisbon, had touched at Coruña and Oporto. In the latter, all was disorderly and discouraging. The bishop, an intriguing and dangerous priest, had raised a faction, over which his own influence was paramount, but who were valueless in every thing that regarded the safety of the country. The only effective troops, were some fifteen hundred men under the command of an English officer, Sir Robert Wilson; but this force was in some respects objectionable, and the Lusitanian legion, from the peculiarity of its formation, and the exclusive privileges it enjoyed, was calculated to excite both jealousy and suspicion.*

Having supplied the authorities with 300,000 dollars, and moved two English battalions from Oporto to Almeida, whither Sir Robert Wilson followed, General Cradock proceeded to Lisbon. All there was in disorder and alarm; the Government had lost any slight authority it had once possessed—and the mob daily became more troublesome, until, in a brief space of time, the English general found more difficulty in coercing those who were termed allies, than in arranging a defence, or completing his preparations for an abandonment of the country, should open enmity prove successful.

The strange inactivity of Victor after the defeat of Cuesta at Medellin, and Soult's hesitation to commence active operations, surrounded as he was on every hand by enemies, and cut off from his communications with the east of Spain, by the Portuguese having seized the bridge of

* The Legion was raised by the advice of Souza, the Portuguese minister in London. The men had additional pay, and, in every respect, were placed on a more favourable establishment than the rest of the national force. The colour of their clothing also differed from the Portuguese uniform, and as Souza was a creature of the Bishop, the Regency had reason to look suspicious on a force in every thing anomalous, and which might be employed to forward "the machinations of a turbulent priest."

Amarante; these circumstances alone prevented the departure of the British army, and afforded Sir John Cradock time to receive reinforcements from England. That general's situation was in the highest degree embarrassing. His preparations to leave the Tagus, in the event of Victor's advance, had roused the apprehensions of the upper classes, and excited the jealousy of the rabble. Lisbon was in an uproar; the mob had been most unwisely armed by Mr. Villiers with muskets and pikes, and the uses to which they applied these weapons, were to murder or ill-use every foreigner whom they met. The cry of treason was raised; a British uniform no longer ensured the safety of the wearer; couriers were robbed of their despatches; the guards insulted on their posts; and, to such a pitch of violence did mob-audacity arrive, that the same dispositions made by Junot for his security, were now of necessity resorted to by Cradock; and, from the temper of the Portuguese, there can be little doubt, had the expected embarkation been attempted, that the British troops must have opened a passage to their ships with the bayonet.

Nor was this spirit confined to Lisbon. In Oporto the disposition to insult the British was more openly encouraged than in the capital, and the government of the multitude was more decidedly pronounced. From the cities it spread to the villages. The people of the Alentejo frontier were, indeed, remarkably apathetic; but, from the Minho to the Tagus, the country was in horrible confusion; the soldiers were scattered, without regard to military system, and, being unpaid, lived at free quarters; the peasantry of the country assembling in bands, and the populace of the towns in mobs, intercepted the communications, appointed or displaced the generals at their pleasure, and massacred all persons of whom they were suspicious.*

It is now well known, that the abandonment of the Peninsula had been all but decided upon by the English ministry, and Sir John Cradock, in obedience to

* Napier.

orders he received from home, had expedited every preliminary arrangement for an embarkation. The interruption of friendly relations between France and Austria, however, caused the government to hesitate in removing their army from the Tagus; and it became a matter of serious consideration, whether Portugal was defensible or not. It is singular, that in this state of doubt the future liberator of Europe should have been appealed to; and the clear and comprehensive statement which Lord Castlereagh's application to Sir Arthur Wellesley elicited from the latter, went far in confirming the wavering opinions of the English ministry, and led to the adoption of that policy, which restored freedom to the continent, and sealed the ruin of Napoleon.

MEMORANDUM ON THE DEFENCE OF PORTUGAL.

" London, 9th March, 1809.

" I have always been of opinion, that Portugal might be defended, whatever might be the result of the contest in Spain; and that, in the mean time, the measures adopted for the defence of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards, in their contest with the French.

" My opinion was, that the Portuguese military establishments, upon the footing of 40,000 militia and 30,000 regular troops, ought to be revived; and that, in addition to these troops, His Majesty ought to employ an army in Portugal amounting to about 20,000 British troops, including about 4000 cavalry. My opinion was, that even if Spain should have been conquered, the French would not have been able to overrun Portugal with a smaller force than 100,000 men; and that, as long as the contest should continue in Spain, this force, if it could be put in a state of activity, would be highly useful to the Spaniards, and might eventually have decided the contest.

" It is obvious, however, that the military establishments of Portugal could not be revived without very extensive pecuniary assistance and political support from this country; and the only mode in which it appeared to be safe, or

even practicable, to give this assistance and support, or to interfere at all in a military way in the concerns of Portugal, was to trust the king's ambassador at Lisbon to give or withhold such sums as he might think necessary for the support of military establishments only, and to instruct him to see that the revenues of Portugal, whatever they might be, were in the first instance applied to the same objects. By the operation of these powers and instructions, it is probable that he would have had a complete control over the measures of the Portuguese government; and we might have expected by this time to have in the field an efficient Portuguese army.

“As it was not possible, however, to adopt these measures at that time, and as the attention of the government has necessarily been drawn to other objects, it is probable that the military establishments of Portugal have made but little progress; and in considering the extent of the British force required for the defence of that country, and the other measures to be adopted, the small extent of the Portuguese force, and the probability of an early attack by the enemy, must be considered on the one hand; and, on the other, the continuance of the contest in Spain, and the probability that a very large French force will not be disposable in a very short period of time for the attack upon Portugal.

“I would still recommend the adoption of the political measures above suggested, with a view to the revival of the military establishments in Portugal. It is probable that the expense of these measures will not in this year exceed a million sterling. But if they should succeed, and the contest should continue in Spain and in Portugal, the benefit which will accrue from them will be more than adequate to the expense incurred.

“The British force employed in Portugal should, in this view of the question, not be less than 30,000 men, of which number 4000 or 5000 should be cavalry, and there should be a large body of artillery.

“The extent of force in cavalry and artillery, above

required, is because the Portuguese military establishments must necessarily be deficient in these two branches; and British or German cavalry and artillery must be employed with the Portuguese infantry.

“The whole of the army in Portugal, Portuguese as well as British, should be placed under the command of British officers. The staff of the army, the commissariat in particular, must be British: and these departments must be extensive in proportion to the strength of the whole army which will act in Portugal, to the number of detached posts which it will be necessary to occupy, and in a view to the difficulties of providing and distributing supplies in that country. In regard to the detail of these measures, I recommend that the British army in Portugal should be reinforced as soon as possible with some companies of British riflemen, with 3000 British or German cavalry; that the complement of ordnance with that army should be made thirty pieces of cannon, of which two brigades should be nine-pounders; that these pieces of ordnance should be completely horsed; that twenty pieces of brass (twelve-pounders) ordnance, upon travelling carriages, should be sent to Portugal, with a view to the occupation of certain positions in the country; that a corps of engineers for an army of 60,000 men should be sent there, and a corps of artillery for sixty pieces of cannon.

“I understand that the British army now in Portugal consists of 20,000 men, including cavalry. It should be made up 20,000 infantry, at least, as soon as possible, by additions of riflemen and other good infantry, which by this time may have been refitted after the campaign in Spain.

“The reinforcements may follow, as the troops shall recover from their fatigues.

“The first measures to be adopted are to complete the army in Portugal with its cavalry and artillery, and to horse the ordnance as it ought to be. As soon as this shall be done, the general and staff officers should go out; as it may be depended upon, that as soon as the newspapers shall have announced the departure of officers for Portugal,

the French armies in Spain will receive orders to make their movements towards Portugal, so as to anticipate our measures for its defence. We ought, therefore, to have every thing on the spot, or nearly so, before any alarm is created at home respecting our intentions.

“ Besides the articles above enumerated, 30,000 stands of arms, clothing and shoes, for the Portuguese army, should be sent to Lisbon as soon as possible.”

The chief difficulty in carrying Sir Arthur Wellesley's plans into effect, might have been apprehended from the pride or jealousy of the Portuguese, which was not unlikely to take offence at any arrangement which would remove the command of their army from native officers and confer it on a stranger. On this occasion, however, the good sense of the government prevailed, and overtures were made to Great Britain which, on her part, were liberally accepted. By these arrangements the Portuguese army was taken into English pay, placed under English officers, organized on the same system, subjected to the same regulations, and in every respect made, for the time being, an integral portion of the British army.

As the chief command was to be vested in an English general, it was offered to Sir Arthur Wellesley; but he declined it. The appointment, however, was eagerly sought for by several officers of superior character and claims; and General Beresford, though junior in rank to many of the applicants, was eventually chosen by the government.

In remodelling the Portuguese battalions, the British general had many difficulties to overcome; but the progressive improvement in both the appearance and discipline of the troops encouraged him to persevere, and showed what system and perseverance will achieve. Every thing necessary for the equipment of the army had been sent from England, and “ though a revolution could not be effected in a moment, nor were its beneficial consequences fully felt till a later period of the war,” the

Portuguese regiments in a short time became creditable to themselves and their commander.

The British government, determined on making another great effort to relieve the Peninsula, lost no time in reinforcing the troops which still remained in the vicinity of Lisbon. The Coruña regiments, so soon as they could be rendered serviceable, and battalions not previously employed, were marched to the coast, and from thence forwarded to the Tagus. Cradock's force was thus gradually increased, until it mustered fourteen thousand men; while, by Beresford's exertions, the better portion of the Portuguese regular troops, in nearly equal numbers, were collected between Lisbon and the Mondego. Encouraged by the united opinions of Generals Beresford and Hill—the latter having recently come out from England—in the middle of March, Cradock, leaving a garrison in the capital, moved the remainder of his army to Lumiar and Saccavem.

The English general, having established magazines at Coimbra and Abrantes, used every exertion to prepare his army for active operations; and the inaction of the enemy continued. Several plans were recommended for Sir John Cradock to adopt, most of them remarkable for nothing but their absurdity.* Circumstances suddenly changed. Soult crossed the Minho, defeated Romana and Silveira, and carried Oporto by assault. Lapisse appeared before Rodrigo—and Victor, passing the Tagus at Almarez, marched rapidly in pursuit of Cuesta. These operations have been already detailed. The intended movement of the British army to the north was of course abandoned. Sir John Cradock restricted himself to the occupation of a position in which he could cover Lisbon and the Tagus; and in that position he remained until Sir Arthur Wellesley's arrival.

In the mean time the appointment of Wellesley to the chief command in Portugal had been officially announced;

* "Yet, at this moment, as if in derision, Mr. Frere, the central junta, the junta of Badajos, and the regency of Portugal, were, with common and characteristic foolishness, pressing Sir John Cradock to march into the south of Spain, although there was scarcely a Spanish soldier there in arms to assist him."—*Napier*.

and, with increased powers, he was at this eventful crisis despatched to the Peninsula. Having resigned his secretaryship in Ireland, and vacated his seat in Parliament, Sir Arthur embarked on board the *Surveillante* with his staff, left Portsmouth on the 16th of April, and after a dangerous, but quick passage, anchored in the Tagus on the 22d.

The effect produced upon the British army by the arrival of their favourite chief seemed magical. Into every department, his presence seemed to infuse new life and confidence. Men spoke no longer of defensive security, or speculated on the probable period of their departure from the Tagus; but all looked forward to active service, as a thing consequent on the appearance of a victorious commander; and the general question which was asked was, "When shall we be in readiness to move forward?" The delight of the Portuguese was unbounded, and they welcomed Sir Arthur Wellesley "as if conquest and his name was one." "All day long the streets were crowded with men and women, congratulating one another on the happy event; and at night the city was illuminated even in the most obscure and meanest of its lanes and alleys. In the theatres, pieces were hastily got up, somewhat after the fashion of the masks anciently exhibited among ourselves, in which Victory was made to crown the representative of the hero with laurels, and to address him in language as far removed from the terms of ordinary conversation, as might be expected from an allegorical personage. But it was not by such exhibitions alone that the Portuguese nation sought to evince its confidence in its former deliverer, and its satisfaction at his return. Sir Arthur Wellesley was immediately nominated Marshal-General of the armies of Portugal; by which means, whilst the care of training and managing the whole of the interior economy rested still with Beresford, the fullest authority to move the troops whithersoever he would, and to employ them in any series of operations in which he might desire to embark, devolved upon him."*

* Lord Londonderry's Narrative.

Sir Arthur Wellesley instantly assumed the command, and, in a despatch to Lord Castlereagh, dated from Lisbon, on the 27th of April, 1809, he thus generally details the relative positions of the contending armies.

“ I arrived here on the 22d instant, and having communicated with Lieut.-General Sir John Cradock, to put me in orders on the 25th, I have assumed the command of the army.

“ The whole of the British army in Portugal are assembled at Leyria and Alcobaca, with the exception of the 2d battalion 30th regiment, in garrison at Lisbon; of the 16th Light Dragoons, on its march to join the army; and of the 2d battalion 24th regiment, the 3d Dragoon Guards, and the 4th Dragoons, just landed.

“ The corps of Marshal Soult is still in the north of Portugal, occupying the city of Oporto, with its advanced posts at Ovar. It is engaged with its left in an attack upon General Silveira on the Tamaga, with a view to open the province of Tras os Montes, for its communication with Spain.

“ The corps of General Lapisse, which had advanced from Salamanca, and had threatened an attack upon the province of Beira, has marched along the frontiers of Portugal to Alcantara, where it crosses the Tagus; and it is now joined with that under the command of Marshal Victor, at Merida, upon the Guadiana.

“ The corps of Marshal Victor has been upon the Guadiana since the defeat of the Spanish army under General Cuesta, with its advanced posts south of that river.

“ General Cuesta is at Llerena; and, I understand, by a communication from Mr. Frere to the Secretary of State, a copy of which has been sent here, that the Spanish government are taking measures to reinforce that general; and that he will move into Portugal, if Victor should take advantage of the absence of the British army engaged in operations to the northward of Portugal.

“ Under these circumstances, I have determined forth-

with to move to the northward. I purpose to take with me 6000 Portuguese troops, and the whole of the British troops now in Portugal, with the exception of the 2d battalion 30th regiment, the 2d battalion 24th regiment, the brigade of infantry under the command of Major-General Mackenzie, and the 3d Dragoon Guards and 4th Dragoons.

“ These troops, with about 7000 Portuguese infantry and cavalry, will be left upon the Tagus to watch the movements of the enemy upon the frontier, and to guard the passages over the river, between Abrantes and Santarem.

“ As soon as the enemy shall have evacuated the north of Portugal, it is my intention to return to the eastern frontier of the kingdom, and to cooperate with the Spanish general Cuesta, against the army of Marshal Victor.”

Such was the state of peninsular relations—such the attitude of allies and enemies, when “ upon this scene of doubt, difficulty, and distraction,” the career of the Hero of Assye commenced anew. To that career few dared anticipate a fortunate close, while many foreboded disaster and defeat. But none could see in the earlier successes of Wellesley on the Douro, the opening of that glorious course, in which “ Victory followed in his footsteps,” until at Waterloo she placed her wreath around his brows, and stamped immortality upon the name of Wellington.

END OF VOL. I.

7

7

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

89094732088



b89094732088a



89094732088



B89094732088A